The Youth Communes

Roy Ald

A TOWER BOOK

THE YOUTH COMMUNES

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PART I

On The Commune Scene

Introduction

It was my intention to explore the hippie communal scene in order to determine whether it is a passing phase or the basis for an alternate culture. I came to know the hip communitarian as an uncompromising "drop-out" intent upon cutting all ties with the Establishment (which he viewed as a vast and impersonal technostructure).* He or she insists upon the credo of living one's own life, without exactly defining what this entails. He chooses to fraternize with those of like sensibility so that he can do his own thing. Even among his kind, he shuns long-range commitment in or out of wedlock. His sense of community is unique. It dwells on an intimate, non-verbal rapport and rejects the notion of leadership and "pecking order," which has tradi-

* The term coined by economist/statesman John Kenneth Galbraith in his book, *The Industrial State*.

tionally provided the framework for social structuring.

He is the most educated product produced in any society and yet he is anti-intellectual. He is the heir of the most affluent and productive of societies and yet he belittles material possessions. He is contemptuous of organized religion and yet gives evidence—in his own search for expanded consciousness—of being more susceptible to religious sensibility than any modern generation. His interest in the mystical and occult, in astrology, I Ching and Zen Buddhism, is everywhere in evidence. Violence is the problem of his generation yet his non-violent instincts lie with Christ and Ghandi.

If to think of such rag-tag bands of unshorn, unwashed, largely pacific and transcendental young people as a threat to the security of the world's leading technostructure is ludicrous, one needs to be reminded of the early Christians, with their contempt for material goods and worldly power. How did they appear to the predominant Greco-Roman culture? Did they not call down upon their unshorn heads all manner of derision and hounding abuse? Were they not classed as pestiferous eyesores with galling disrespect for entrenched traditions? *The value system is the supportive frame of any social structure.* Perhaps the Establishment's growing tendency to weigh its technocratic ends against humanitarian ones, is already evidence of "hippie" influence!

I refrained from any negotiations in advance to avoid any limitations of editorial viewpoint and subject matter treatment. I was determined to keep the situation open-ended and allow the experience to happen without prior commitment to a specific point of view or deadline.

After establishing three definite contacts—an extended family situation in suburban Massachusetts and two collective, or commune-type rural-living arrangements, one in New Hampshire and the other in Vermont—I packed my gear and left New York City. I had allowed my hair to grow and adopted buckskins for comfort and rugged wearability, as well as for their appropriateness to the hippie milieu. My gear consisted of a portable tape recorder and an ample supply of cartridge tapes, as well as several notebooks of my own poetry and clippings on the underground poet, Armand Kihl. I anticipated easier acceptance as Armand Kihl, poet, than Roy Ald, journalist. To assuage a conscience burdened with the notion that I would be sailing under false colors, I fully intended to write a portfolio of poems. *

My initial transportation was a red-blanched '64 Volks—which was stolen or, less objectionably, *taken*, since the hippie communal ethos rejects individual ownership, by a member of the fourth commune I visited. This was seven weeks after my departure. I then purchased a rebuilt Harley Davidson, which proceeded to Osterize my organs on backwoods roads until I abandoned it and reconciled myself to an odyssey continued by rail, bus, and thumb. The five hundred dollars I had taken in traveler's checks had rapidly dwindled. I discovered that such a state of secret affluence was intolerable in, for the most part, penurious surroundings. I soon found myself becoming one among many other searchers for the new way of a hopeful, utopian communal spirit.

* Soon to be published under the title, *Jesus Loves Buddha.*

I'm on my way, I'm on my way
God knows where I'm on my way
So take my hand and I won't weep
Along the way . . .

In the space of six months I visited twenty-two communal settlements in the following states: New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Oregon, California, and New Mexico. In each instance, people whom I met along the way directed me to other group-living experiments. After two disappointing, quite out-of-the-way journeys, one led to by rumor and the other by second-hand information, I learned to depend only upon personal first-hand information. Many attempts at group living were too limited in scope or too short-lived to serve as instructive examples. However, the majority seemed to fall into the following categorizations:

* *The collective settlement*, well-ordered and work-oriented, and, with few exceptions, agrarian. Rather conservative in its general life-style, perhaps because of the no-nonsense *kibbutzim* approach necessary for its economic base. The religio-transcendental orientation tends to assume a prominent place. Though sexuality is frequently open and spontaneous, the monogamous attachment tends to be the rule. Drug usage is either limited or forbidden.
* *The commune*, the most common form of societal living, characterized by an open sexuality and an unprogrammed or even determinedly anarchistic structure. Predominantly, though not exclusively rural. Drug usage is pervasive.
* *The expanded or extended family*, mostly suburban, and based on some form of utopian or

metaphysical design. There are two distinct forms for the extended family: one wherein married or unmarried males and females participate in spontaneous, open relationships; and the constrasting one, strictly for married couples.

* The *tribal group*, with a powerful mystical orientation rooted in the unquestioned dominance of an individual of "nuclear personality." Rituals and relationships vary to absolute extremes of the ascetic or Dionysian.

The communal hippie is usually one of a type and, within his own group, can be classified thus:

The *high priest*, *guru* or *enlightened teacher*, the inspirational and guiding force toward a new sensibility.

The *disciple or apostle*, versed in the metaphysics of his leader and actively spreading his gospel, whether he be a contemporary and peer or someone such as Thoreau, Huxley, Skinner, etc. The prime movers and organizers of the evolving hippie communal pattern are from this group.

The *true believer*, comprising the real substance of the movement, and truly committed to the new values and alternate life-style.

At the conclusion of my survey, I had some fourteen hours of taped recordings, many made without the subjects' awareness, and a number of them of conversations in which I did not participate. Due to several experiences, distrust pervades the communes when questions are asked suggesting media surveillance. Some groups have been compelled to disband as a result of published articles which incensed the surrounding established community.

When I revealed my journalistic intention to the leader of a commune in Oregon, I was removed

bodily from the premises and two of my completed tapes were confiscated. Fortunately, I'd been mailing completed tapes to my secretary in New York City. The explanation was that, in the past, published remarks of certain individuals had kicked back, bringing their whereabouts to the attention of parents, spouse, creditors, etc. For these reasons no individual or location is expressly identified.

THE ELECTRONIC LITERATES

One learns quickly that the new breed of communitarian falls into one of two categories: "verbals" and "non-verbals." The former are articulate, linguistically expressive, and demonstrate a respect fore the intellectual rigors. They are all too eager to grasp at any conversational straw and are at their best when confronting each other in intellectual debates on the philosophical and spiritual values of their movement. To them, such rappings serve as spiritual bread, and are the mainstay of the collective living experience. On the other hand, the non-verbals are generally down on dialogues, limiting their mode of communication to shrugs, grunts, and verbal quantum gaps, and are altogether skeptical of the verbals.

Tall and gangling and in his early twenties, Ralph J. dropped out of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (where he was an engineering major)

in his senior year, after increasing disillusion with "our emotionally sick, sandbag social structure." Ralph had some enlightening reflections on the verbals: "Let me tell you, I know where their heads are at. I've been there myself. Verbals sit around with their legs tucked under their asses, blowing over each other like a hot Tijuana wind. They're word machines, man. That's their hangup, and every group I've been in, they've busted up. They sit around and bullshit, they never come to anything, and the whole scene collapses under their inert asses."

Ralph talked in short staccato outbursts, as if the speech process itself were distasteful to him, despite the fact that he had a remarkable and even innovative command of language. The entire issue of language is a fundamental one in the hippie commune movement. Ralph's first group-living experience was as part of an extended family experiment in an old, colonial mansion in a Boston suburb. It was an experience which led to two other, equally dissatisfying ones, and finally to his present place in a rural, agrarian collective in New Hampshire, where I met him.

Ralph was onto an altogether *new* form of communication, subjective, and having to do with a deeper, vertical consciousness, perhaps a multi-consciousness and engaging many facets of the human psyche untouched by the *old* language. Listening to Ralph, I found many disparate elements falling into place, better explaining the constant use of the expression "vibes," one of the most common on the new communal scene referring to a whole range of subtle intangible feelings.

A bare-breasted, dark-haired girl I encountered in a Big Sur commune, in response to my question

about how things were shaping up in her group and whether she thought it might be a good place for me to stay awhile, said, "It's a rashy place and it'll rub you raw if you can't tune into your own thing." This was accompanied by a hand gesture and facial expression which was part of a whole body language in which words played only one part. Grunts, broken-off words, and moments of silence are as meaningful as complete sentences, and comprise the language of the non- or demi-verbals, by far the larger majority of the commune hippies. The incongruity of a steadily downgraded literacy among the brightest and best educated youth is one I had given much thought to, even before venturing out into the communal environs. There seems to be a retrogression in the speech pattern, and a primitive tribal literacy has become the common objective. This is understandable in the context of a rejection of all values of the entrenched social structure by the sorely disheartened young inheritors of the older generation's despoliation. But this approach, which encourages a weakening of the most unique of human attributes, appears to be totally self-negating and destructive. The meeting with Ralph, however, cast some fascinating new sidelights on the subject as possibly a germinal force of the commune movement.

Ralph made obvious his difficulty in trying to reach me on a purely verbal level and finally, with some frustration, interrupted himself with comments which reflected his engineering background. Several of his attempts, interspersed with the usual repetition of, "like, uh, you know", led to the outburst, "It's something you get to dig by yourself, man, or else you don't. I couldn't tell you in so many words. Nobody could. It's like—words, con-

versation, is linear. Horizontal, right off the top of your head. The cortex, the intellectual part. You've got to *feel* it on a hundred levels, a thousand, don't you see? Did you know that ten thousand impressions hit us every single second of our lives?"

Ralph was on his feet, moving back and forth, noticeably impatient and disturbed by the subject which he insisted was the most serious one and the basis for the disintegration of many hippie collective living experiments. "It's got to be *non*-linear. Exchange, the communication, has got to get through on all of the levels of human consciousness if we're ever going to stop busting heads and really come together." He moved constantly, his actions and expressions an accented accompaniment, a kind of subtle enactment of what he was describing. He used his hands and arms when he described the importance of physical labor in the organization and maintenance of a commune, making easily comprehensible signs for working the soil, building dwellings, and so on. At the same time he derided the verbals for "building a utopia inside their heads," their pitiful ineptness, and their downright laziness when it came to the completion of those chores required to actualize their ideas.

My own observation had led me to a more conventional conclusion about the ineptitude of these hippie theoreticians. A great many of them, raised in the more affluent urban communities, would be ill at ease with the ways of the self-reliant 4-H'er and the survival capabilities of the trail-hardened outdoorsman. The truth is that I had depended upon a standard of measure so rooted in tradition—that the ratio of manual labor related on a descending scale with superior intelligence—that it

never occurred to me that a fresh evaluation was called for. I concentrated an inordinate amount of time and attention on the expressed ideas and thoughts of the debate-prone intellectual hippie utopian, that same type whom Ralph now pointed out to me as the bone in the throat of the communal movement. He called them "electronic illiterates," putting down the entire idea of verbal literacy as a linear thought pattern of the past.

"All of the old stops are built into the language form we use. As soon as we're born, we're fitted into the traditional alphabetic strait-jacket. It's like the carapace which imprisons the insect. Real quick, the shell hardens, and change, any further development, is impossible unless he sheds that outer casing." To Ralph, the intellectuality of these word-wise verbals was a self-paralyzing dead-end. "They're too tightly intellectually structured, and the lousiest kind of influence on a communal situation which has got to flow—flow, man, you dig? Like the pattern of raindrops on a window pane, running into each other in continuously open options." Ralph repeated the analogy which he apparently enjoyed, going on—with some difficulty—to explain this as the quintessential difference between the spirit of the new communal movement and the collectives and utopian communities throughout history.

"Look at a city, man. It's a blueprint—a flow chart, assembly-line tin-canned in university factories," Ralph said. "And look at the woods—the unexpected, tangled outgrowths. The difference between the old solid-body word machine community and the atomic or electronic consciousness, spontaneous as new jungle growth, that's the model for the new kind of commune. It has got to be the life-

Taken aback by the extremity of Ralph's reaction, I was concerned that I would be asked to leave or that his hostility toward me might cause the others to avoid me. But I soon discovered that there was more than a little friction between Ralph and some of the others in the group, which was disproportionately male, with only nine females and three children. The reason for this undercurrent, as I began to understand it, helped to explain Ralph's outburst. There were such comments about him as, "He takes himself too seriously and the eager-beaver bit gets to be a pain in the ass." "He's always onto some hustle—I'll do this if you'll do that."

But it was Joni, a pert-faced blond with a fresh-scrubbed look who appeared no more than seventeen (but insisted she was twenty-three), a graduate of the University of North Carolina, who drew the most complete portrait of Ralph.

They had, by her own admission, "made it together," but Ralph had become "too possessive and it was a drag. And when I told him to go screw, would you believe that he tried to hold a meeting and get me run out of here because, as he cornily phrased it, I was 'a dissident element.'" She chuckled and shook her head. "It isn't that he has anything against me, personally. He really feels that I'm some kind of threat to the group. He takes it all so seriously. He's been with others, you know, and tried to start one himself and they all fell apart, and he runs around half the time worrying that the same thing is going to happen here.

"I was one of the originals in the group. There were five of us. I was living in Woodstock and we met this kid, Karl R., his father is some kind of manufacturer in Norwalk, Connecticut, and this place belongs to them. Eleven acres, and it had this

THE ASTRONAUTS OF INNER SPACE

In terms of its effect upon the organization and maintenance of a communal group, I could see where drugs would be decidedly negative, for in this regard, I myself had had a bad personal experience. On a visit to Haight-Ashbury for a previous series of stories, someone directed me to a crash pad where I could spend the night. Entering a darkened hallway that needed major repair, I had one of those freak accidents when I gashed the inside of my thigh near the crotch on a protruding wood support from a hand-railing. I began bleeding profusely. There were perhaps fourteen or fifteen people in the first room I came to, slumped over or lying in assorted positions, stoned. When I tried to get some help several looked on curiously and quite sympathetically, and one of them, a rather emaciated young woman, went so far as to tear off and hand me a section of a soiled sheet, but any sign of

assistance ended right there. If I had been seriously injured, I could have bled to death. Where cooperation is the adhesive of the communal bond, the stoned state would seem to be an especially undesirable one.

Some time after my visit to Ralph's commune, I encountered a situation, one with ugly racial overtones that further demonstrated the incompatibility of drugs and the spirit of communal reciprocity. But a mollified Ralph, whom I once again engaged in conversation after the interval of a day to let him cool down, insisted the part played by drugs on the communal scene was an important, even essential one. He included acid, mescaline, psilocybin, and marijuana, though not methedrine (the message "speed kills" is a fairly well-accepted tenet) nor the hard drugs.

Ralph was decidedly pro acid and pot because, as he explained it, "Nature is a system that is continually extending itself, making its own accommodations to the forces brought to bear inside it." He insisted that drugs for expanding the human consciousness *had* developed because "we were blasted into the interior cosmos of the atomic world. Suddenly, flesh and bone, glass-wall skyscraper, tin can, planet, we were all part of the same electronic storm. We had to hang in there and find a way to come together, recover our bodies, and we invented a whole new technology to do it, but the hardware wasn't enough. We were threatening to blast ourselves to hell and back and polluting the atmosphere and everything in it that we suddenly recognized as part of ourselves. And we had to bust out of our heads, extend the senses into that interior cosmos to see the new ways that we were hooked into each other.

"Believe me, if you've tried acid, then you know that when Leary talks about acid-heads as the astronauts of inner space, he knows whereof he speaks. The psychedelics are the morning-glory seeds that have sprouted the whole 'make-love-not-war' generation. We're onto a whole new electronic consciousness thing, a collective consciousness in a common body made of the soil, air, and blood. That's what these communes are—that's what they're all about."

Suddenly, the inspirational side of Ralph had crowded out the pragmatist and, profoundly moved, he talked on with eloquence as if this new world was upon us and it was a matter only of finding ways to reorient it. It recalled to me these lines from an Allen Ginsberg poem,

No one will have to announce New Age
No special name, no Unique way,
no crier by Method or
Herald of Snakey Unknown,
No Messiah necessary but
the Country ourselves fifty years old—
Allah this tree, Eternity this Space Age!

It was Sharon, twenty-six years old and the mother of three lovely and beautifully extroverted girls whom I met as part of an extended family group newly formed in an Oregon suburb, who confided to me her concern about domestic and world affairs and told me about her past active dedication to political causes. She had now removed herself from the affairs of the community at large and passed her time, as she described it, "smoking pot, making love and converting from thinking to feel-

ing." She described this as her "prescription for striving for a new self in a communal situation."

The smile of her beneficent high was condescending. She was patient with her explanation as one who had been *there*, shaping the naiveté of the stranger looking on from afar. "I used to think that's where the action was—anti-Vietnam, civil rights, the Poor People's March. You know, that kind of bag. And gradually it got to me. Will, my husband, had a lot to do with that, turning me onto pot and the metaphysical thing, that, like, it's all Yin-Yang, you know, positive-negative. And even opposition to *their* game supports it. We spend our life energy as the opposing side in the power game—and who's got it now? It's like—like switching sides on the same board. The only way to beat it is to drop out. To refuse to play their game, to even recognize their rules. We've got to link up together with loving vibrations and dream our own images."

My retort was harsh, offering an unadulterated picture of dying Vietnamese and Biafrans and starving U.S. blacks and whites while she and others like her blew their dreamy smoke rings into the air. She continued smiling, never blinking an eye and looking at me as though I were absurd. "We're blowing those smoke rings right back into their heads. We're changing the world, don't you *feel* it, man? Everywhere you look, whatever you read or see or hear out there, we're into it, rocking their values, their materialistic philosophy, their whole kind of reality thing. They dress different, they're starting to talk different, and the mystical thing is getting to them. And don't kid yourself that it's strictly commercial with astrology, Buddhist temples and Hindu swami classes in transcendental

meditation. And what do you think this whole Esalen, T-group movement is all about? By doing our own thing, we're getting them to turn onto *our* game. We're rocking the world, man. And it's a communal thing, a group consciousness thing."

On one occasion I was witness to an argument in a particularly unruly, briefly organized commune (later dispersed by local authorities) of some fifteen to twenty persons in Carmel, California. A wall-eyed, red-bearded young man, already partially bald and dressed in an improvised monk's tunic, had helped himself to the cheap pocket watch of a thin, somewhat effeminate-looking boy—he certainly was not yet seventeen—with shoulder-length black hair and an incongruously fierce temper. He had grabbed for his pocket watch, struggling to remove it from the other's hands. "It's *my* watch. Let go of it, you motherfucker! It's mine!"

With several of us instantly attracted to the ruckus, the tall, well-built, heavily mustached unofficial group organizer intervened. But not on the side of the victim. He angrily retrieved the timepiece which was now in the hands of its rightful owner and pressed it onto the now uncertain thief, angrily rebuking him, "You want the watch—here, take it. You don't have to sneak it, man. Just go up and tell the brother, I want the watch. It's just as much yours as it is his. Everything is. There isn't any 'mine.' Tell the brother that we're all part of the whole world and it's all a part of us."

He then exhorted those of us gathered around, using the incident to emphasize what he felt was an important point in the organization of their group. "What you've got to remember is that I'm you and you're me. There is no dividing line. And

what is around us to be used is to be used in common as needed. There is no selling, no inheritance of physical possessions. We consume them and turn them into shit, restoring them in their fundamental form in the total living ecology."

An extreme demonstration and, within the context of the past structured on an objective or *object* reality, an impractical one, but perhaps significant to a new future reality structured on a truly new communal consciousness. It may jibe more than we are prepared to acknowledge, with the scientific views of Buckminster Fuller, for example, who forecast that material possessions would be reduced to essential energy and instantly reconstructed in any form, by anyone and in any given place, all consumable and disposable so that the entire concept of storing or possessing may be obviated.

The idea of reducing all physical bodies to a fundamental form of energy to be acted upon in new ways (consonant with recent theoretical and experimental turns in the sciences) is a common and recurrent one everywhere on the hippie communal scene. Meditative practices, transcendental rituals and the notion of bringing pure *feeling* to bear in the shaping of things to come documents the preeminence of the spiritual as the new communal driving force. As Carol D. remarked on the religious orientation of this new breed of sensory pioneers, this is a subject everywhere underscored in the superficial Establishment examinations of the hippie psyche. But contrary to the Establishment religions which base their efforts on the simplistic notion that the young are literally begging to be taken back into the fold, this is clearly a new kind of religion, a whole new inspirational phenomenon.

It is a Western notion, tempered and chastened by science, wherein the God-in-man has as its purpose self-control of human destiny.

Despite my acquaintance with and occasional deep immersion in the hippie milieu, I was not prepared for the extent to which the mystical and the philosophic permeated every level of the communal movement, even among those groups which appeared on the surface to have quite practical and goal-oriented bases.

One such group in a Boston suburb was based upon a book by Robert Rimmer, well known among utopians for his *Harrad Experiment*. As explained to me by Arthur H., an architect with a major firm (with the aid of a flow-chart and corporate family contract), "It is simply an updated adaptation of the institution of marriage and the family structure. This way, with five married couples involved in a broadened intergroup relationship, we are better off financially, share a more stimulating environment, sexually, companionate, and intellectually. Our children have a livelier atmosphere for mental development and constant alternates for a source of continuous affection and love."

They occupied a sixteen-room refurbished mansion, and were provided with all of the blessings of a very ample income (all members of the group were employed in remunerative professions). The primary purpose of their radical communal living experiment is "a kind of desperate attempt to break down the callous wall of human separateness."

The corporate family had instituted common meditation sessions and practiced their own ver-

sion of T-group therapy in order, to quote one who identified himself as a publisher of technical manuals, "to sort out the chaff from the grain of our very precious human essence." An interesting practice during such sessions was to pass along to each other a common, everyday object, each to describe, define and relate to it in *emotional* ways, "to revive the deadened capacity for wonder."

A plump, heavy-bosomed braless girl in a Northern California commune, nicknamed Futz for her nonstop promiscuity, good-naturedly accepted the perpetual gropings, slurs and kidding of those around her, and explained her permissive behavior to me with unaffected candor. Indeed, she had a capacity for wonder. "I was on this acid trip with this guy and he had his cock inside me and when I looked at it, it was—like electrified, like it was sending these electric charges right through me. And since that time, I've been fucking for anybody. It's like having all this life energy flowing through me."

The more my exposure to the subjective or subject "I" language (as opposed to the intellectual object language) the more I recognized that I had to learn to ignore a literal interpretation of their speech in order to understand the altogether new sensory language. To them, the alphabet is like the prism, many faceted and responsive to the multilayers of feeling. Even those minds, trite and juvenile like Futz's, seizing upon excuses to fulfill immediate desires, had something to tell me if I would but listen with a Reichian "third ear." Her energy-replenishing Yin-Yang, male-female, positive-negative, electrifying physical concepts, could be juxtaposed with the intuitional views of the grass-imbibing, politically deactivated, Oregon

commune mother of three who rendered meaningful the current politics-to-sex switchover.

It was *not without great difficulty* that I *found* my neat analytical categories for defining the hippie communal scene increasingly blurred. Had not the nature-worshiping desert mystic, member of the first New Mexico commune I visited, informed me that he was convinced his emotional meditations had thought-projecting influence on a collective consciousness, such as Allen Ginsberg's exorcism of the Pentagon? And could not the heated-up national controversy on military spending and Nixon's own reduced military budget be seen as a tangible result of such transcendental cogitations? I could not avoid a logical relationship between such possibilities and the scientifically validated experiments of the Japanese physicist, Kamiya, which demonstrated the individual's control of the projection of his own brain waves. Or the advertisement in the *Scientific American* by an organization, Psycho Physics, Inc., of a device selling for $170.00 for the purpose of training the brain waves.

Upon further acquaintance, a mystic in American Indian attire (beaded headband, single-braided dark hair, painted forehead), Joe M., thirty-three, brilliant, witty, self-educated, described himself as, "a Gauguin-type escapee from a wife and three kids and a soft-touch sinecure with a major record company, managing name rock groups." He claimed that their music and lyrics had turned him on to their scene, "and after six months of so-called guidance by a phony-baloney Manhattan swami, I put it all together in my own head and came to where it was happening." By this he meant the communal movement to which he had wholeheart-

edly attached himself, partly as an exhibitionistic put-on which he thoroughly enjoyed as well as the macrobiotic diet which he swore restored his full virility for "a complete and varied cuisine of fresh plastic teenybopper flower juice."

For all of his teasing ironies, Joe, an admirer of Yippie Abbie Hoffman, was a perceptive evaluator of the hippie communal scene. First he described the movement to me as a gathering of the clan, and then recited to me a passage from *Portnoy's Complaint* where Portnoy, upon his visit to Israel, reacted with astonishment at the realization that for the first time in his life, he was among his own kind—everybody was Jewish, passersby, taxicab drivers, etc. In a like sense, the surfacing sub-culture is a communal adventure, a collectivization of kindred souls, as is the new communal language—rejecting the authoritarian insistence upon established historical norms.

He looked upon the emergence of the hippie sensibility as a phenomenon not unlike that of the early Christians. Theirs too was a wholly spiritual force which eventually infused and toppled a remarkably well-entrenched and highly advanced Western culture. He saw the scattered hippie communal movement in its present stage as a step toward a similar end vis-à-vis the Establishment. An avowed user of mescaline, some of Joe's other views were outasight, including an interest in the development of a vestigial cerebral faculty which he referred to as the "mental motion picture" and its capability of literally transmitting thought-images.

Joe's etymological talent, a gift for reassembling the language of community, common bonding, collective consciousness, and reassembling their

source derivations, contributed much to my comprehension of the hippie communal phenomenon. With limited formal education—he had never gone beyond high school—his behavior and outlook were typical of thousands of the younger drop-out hippies who managed to escape the long arm of higher education. Within the larger central group of communal participants, wherein the number of college-educated is exceptionally high, their efforts to employ a vocabulary of the sensibility is more strained and sometimes ridiculously affected, perhaps because the training of the intellect, a process which Ralph and the entire sub-culture is down on, becomes too rigidly fixed a pattern within the educational experience. Nevertheless, the lingo dealing with vibes—vibrations—and various subliminal undercurrents in the formulation of new human relationships is at the center of the entire movement. And it is only within this context that the true import of the use and influence of marijuana and psychedelic drugs can be grasped. They are the conditioners of the hippie sensibility and, as such, the deconditioners of the intellect.

The formerly politically active young woman of my Oregon encounter had made a point regarding the significance of the increasingly widespread use of pot, filtering from the college campuses into the homes of the middle- and upper middle-classes and spiraling in both directions. It was her way of telling me that the spirit of the hippie communal movement was infusing into the root and fiber of the reigning culture. And if Ralph's concept of the part played by the intellectual faculties has any modicum of truth, the general panic which the smoking of marijuana inspires in the Establishment is understandable. To Ralph, with his aca-

demic background from M.I.T., "Dr. Norbert Wiener's work on cybernetics showed up the human intellect as little more than a calculating machine, which to me explains the Establishment's hangup with intellectual proficiency. Intellectual training is a ready-made way to act on the kind of reality which the dominant culture has decided to accept. The whole damned thing is priorly programmed, the way of perceiving things, the so-called sane and normal ways of emotionally responding to them. What in the hell is the entire educational system? A training ground for the professions and specializations to keep the old machine turning over. Shit! The intellect is a mental computer programmed to maintain the traditional picture of reality." Ralph grimaced and thrust his hand to his mid-section. "The reality-making sense begins here, in the gut. The only way we're going to bust out of our heads is to release those feelings and make our own reality. Right now, we're trapped in a logic box," he said, tapping his head, "and it's keeping us wired into a madhouse labeled 'sanity.' "

An energetic, democratic willingness on the part of the individual to contribute to the general welfare of the community, with an emphasis on the dignity of the individual, were features of Eric Hoffer's utopian ideal. But why was Ralph so antagonistic toward Hoffer's ideas which seemed fundamentally compatible with his? The distinction, as I eventually came to understand it, was a critical one.

Hoffer's model depended upon historical modes, meaning *inter-dependency* within the community or social system. His rugged individualism, the American frontiers ideal, demanded inter-depen-

dency as a self-defensive mechanism against fiercely aggressive tendencies unleashed in an atmosphere of highly competitive empire building (surplus storing). Material values, success orientation, and the positive work ethic are the prime values in such a system.

But everything in the hippie commune movement is down on such concepts. Non-aggressiveness, sometimes to the extent of extreme passivity, is the rule. Materialistic motives, a desire for object possession, is frowned upon and there is no room for work in the hippie trinity of love-pleasure-joy except as a necessary evil. And, of course, it is precisely this simplistic summation which collides with the reigning work-ethic, that is responsible for the condemnation of the developing hippie communal scene.

But Ralph's analysis of the hippie commune discloses a major difference deriving from a radically altered sub-cultural sensibility. Ralph referred to the switchover from the solid-body, Newtonian object-world to an electronic level of interaction in the atomic era. Where the behaviors of rugged individualism make sense in a community of *inter*-dependency, they do not in the hippie commune of *intra*-dependency, for the sense of relationship on an electronic level is infinitely more spiritual and intimate.

The expressions "come together," "sharing" and "communal ownership" have totally new meanings in the hippie lexicon. Unlike their usage in the Marxian materialistic survival economics, they attempt to pierce the spiritual distance between object-oriented individuals and seek to relate within the total range of the subjective. Unlike the *laissez faire* community with its partial con-

cessions to the individual, or the Marxian model with an even more rigorous sacrifice of the individual interest for the ends of the state, the hippie communal model proposes a true liberation of the human spirit. Where the hippie message, "do your own thing," spells out total anarchy to the object-oriented culture, according to Ralph this need not be so. The eye of the electronic sensibility person is different from the eye of the object-person of the established culture. The difference is between the dominance of a material identity in a society basd on the economics of survival and aggression and a new society where science's knowledge of atomic energy and electronic regulation advances the role of the psychic identity, the subjective "I" and a whole new outlook based upon a cosmic, qualitative existence, dominated by harmonious feelings.

Thus, in Ralph's intra-organic community, wherein the participants relate upon electronic levels and energy is freely circulated throughout the system to maintain the object level, the prerogatives of each individual to do his own thing, or anarchy, as many presently understand it, has no sting.

"WE'RE NEW WORLD ARTISTS!"

Sitting around a fire one evening with Futz and several members of her group, cooking up a batch of brown rice and kidney beans, the fellow tending the fire with a long stick playfully poked it between the girl's legs. Futz accepted the gesture without dismay and remarked to the males gathered around the fire, "I don't see what you guys see in a cunt, anyway." She spread her thighs to display herself. "Look at it—it's really an ugly thing." Commented one of the fellows, "When looking at it from the point of view of a hardon, it's beautiful!"

To the hippie sensibility, the prevalent culture which takes such pride in its accomplishments, is a Frankensteinian monstrosity. They would, as the Luddites did, topple it in fury in order that they themselves might not be consumed by it. They have no past history and do not look upon the Es-

tablishment's institutions and machinery as realized goals but see only their quality and function as dehumanizing.

Sara R., who trained for classical ballet but joined the hippie communal movement after less than a year of professional performance, said to me, "My father is an important executive with the Lincoln Center of Performing Arts. He has always earned quite a lot of money and we've always had the best of material possessions. We used to argue a lot because, after all, his profession was an involvement in the arts and he was always talking about the difference in the quality of one's life that art can make. I taught a ballet class to black children in Harlem and from what I could see, everything he'd ever said about the arts amounted to a crock of shit."

We were riding in the back of a buckboard with three other members of a collective farm settlement and had driven into Los Angeles to buy several sacks of flour. "It's sheer hypocrisy to use art as some kind of extraneous luxury," she went on, "and then talk about elevating the *quality* of life of American society. I think we manufacture and can and bottle art the way we do any other commodity, and it wouldn't be possible in our kind of society to treat *anything* any other way. That's been the outlook of the older generation and what they've built is a factory that can't help but package everything in the same way. I really don't believe that anyone over twenty-five—not only businessmen but even if they're writers or poets or composers—can help us build a new society. They're too far gone. The old ways have been built into their bones from the first time the doctor pulled them out of the vagina and slapped them on the ass. They can delude them-

selves about the *quality* of life like my father, but they've been working at the old machines and packaging everything in the factory for too long."

I recall that somewhere Marshall McLuhan has made the statement that if the Establishment means to keep itself going, then they will have to get all the old people to return to industry and learn how to operate the machinery and perform whatever functions necessary because the young people will be dropping out more and more. An exaggeration, but it does make a significant point.

Just as Joe, the former record company executive and presently full-time mystic, looked upon the communal enclaves as a deep-rooted and expanding movement, so did Ralph. He talked of a coming together of a new breed, and of a feedback of their life-style and philosophy into the predominant culture. The latter was a point repeatedly made by many in the hippie communal movement, often in the way of a bolstering of their self-importance but nevertheless not without genuine evidence. Ralph was frank in his acknowledgment that he saw the hippie utopian movement as one of "desperation at not being able to find a place for ourselves and a way to express ourselves, and no hope at all that we could survive for very long in the world as presently structured."

He considered the communal movement very delicate and vulnerable to the tactics and oppressive measures of the dominant culture. Another communal participant, by the name of Rainwater, who claimed, with a secretive air he apparently relished, that he was the son of a high ranking public official, said to me with a chuckle, "You know, the only reason that they don't bust into us and rip up the whole commune scene is that most of us are

their own kids!" He was referring to the very high proportion of young people in the commune movement who are from fairly well-established backgrounds and families of influence.

Ralph likened the tiny hippie commune to a transplant on the larger social body. "The rejection effect is roughest in the early stages. That's when the tissue either takes or it doesn't," Ralph said. He explained that much hinged upon this initial hold, the ability of the commune to dig in to outlast the powerful early counterforces. He pointed out that many of the commune people experiencing failures would drift back into the fold and take up their places with the reigning culture. Certainly, in a large measure, this is true. However, it would also appear to be true that the number of new drop-outs from society greatly exceeds the number of those who cop out from the communes. And although there is a sense of disillusionment and despair among those in the movement because their life is indeed a hard one and demands deprivations to which they are not accustomed and skills which they do not possess, there is also the feeling that they are onto something, that somewhere along the way things will fall into place. In this sense, the fluidity of the scene imbues its participants with the feeling that they are pioneers and that their collective attempts are but experiments for arriving at the truth.

A small, dark-complexioned and outdoor-toughened New Jerseyite, Henry L., age twenty-two, defended the obvious ineptness of his collective in these words, "Sure, we could make it. We could make it easy. If we wanted to build a community by the book. But then, what would we have? We'd have the same thing in here that they have out

there. No, we've got to find our own way to make it. Maybe that's got to sound stupid to you. And if you ask me, I can't tell you why exactly that it's got to be like that. But it's gotta."

Ralph was also very down on doing it by the book and so he was hard on the verbals as intellectual objectifiers. He feared them as the blueprint makers whose own minds were already programmed, meaning, of course, that their minds were already entrapped in the old logic of the reigning social structure. This brings to my mind a comment poignantly expressed by a pathetically crestfallen youngster of eighteen, whom I sprung for a meal at a New York East Village macrobiotic restaurant. Famished and exhausted from his nomadic crash-pad existence and "ducking out from the fuzz" (his parents were making strenuous efforts to locate him), he said, "We're a captive people." It was a remark I heard time and again as I traveled cross-country from one commune to another looking into the strangely haunted eyes of many a utopia-seeking hippie. A former Berkeley psychologist told me quite seriously, "I've had a lot to do with these kids and I think there's something drastically different in them than those of us who've come before them. They're a mutant breed."

Whether the difference in them—which I began to sense deeply after some two months among them—was a question of nature or nurture is quite beside the point. I genuinely do believe that they are possessed of an altered sensibility. "You can't go home again" has become a much-overworked literary theme and a legitimate psychological enigma. For the true communal hippie, the dyed-in-the-wool type which comprises perhaps a third of the

total population, it is as if they never had homes. Like the title of a book, *Strangers in a Strange Land,* much admired in communal circles, they are indeed that.

A burly, heavily dark-bearded, part-time jazz pianist I met among a group of ten part-time hippies in a collective camp near Phoenix got onto this same subject. He was a Rochester University pre-med drop-out and "a fugitive from my draft board." As an ecology militant (active in Santa Barbara during the offshore oil drilling spillover) he had developed an interesting theory. He was of the opinion that very complex changes had begun to occur in people, both physiological and psychological, brought about by modern modes of transportation as well as urban apartment dwellings and occupational mobility, all of which contributed to the separation of people from their land. He no longer saw Person and Place as a single inclusive unit. Something traumatic had blunted the instinct of territorial imperatives. The way he put it, "A kid used to grow up with his own house, trees, whole landscape, where he had a sense of belonging."

He felt that the hippie character is the end product of such a dislocation. Despite his limited knowledge of the subject, it is possible that he found one important clue to the formulation of the hippie psyche. Scientific studies point to the presence in the human body of some form of biological clock which is intimately related to its environment. Disorienting effects upon such biorhythms have been demonstrated. Jet travel and population density can affect body stress, metabolism, even growth. As internationally renowned biologist Dr. Rene Dubos, professor at Rockefeller University,

has recently written in the *Science Journal*, "From the moment of birth, the human mind, and body too, are strongly influenced by the surroundings." He points to the threat to human life in the modern environment which ". . . changes so rapidly that man cannot make the proper adaptive responses to it fast enough," and also stresses sociological disturbances triggered by ". . . the estrangement from the conditions and natural cycles under which evolution took place."

Is it too farfetched to believe that terrestrial dislocation does indeed play a significant role in modern man's sense of alienation? And that in the hippie, the string drawn tauter generation by generation has finally snapped, with the disruption too drastic for his system to accommodate? Very clearly, the concept of the true hippie as having had no home—deprived of his *lebensraum*—does shed some light on the communal movement as an expression of the need to restore a sense of place.

During the single night which I spent with a loose-knit group close to Santa Monica, California, under appalling conditions, I saw a child, a three- or four-year-old girl, weeping continuously, "I want to go home." This was much to the annoyance of a young woman in jeans, long braided hair and Indian band, trying to make conversation with the gangling, bare-chested, apparent leader of the group. When I went up to the small girl and offered her a stick of chewing gum in the hopes of distracting her (she did not know what chewing gum was!), her mother told me with a smile and a shrug that the *home* which the child wished to return to, "was this big rock, sort of a boulder, she used to sit and play on." The boulder was just outside of a communally shared barn in the Big Sur

settlement from which they had come to Santa Monica. They had spent some three months with that group.

Though with respect to a restoration of a sense of place the hippie communal movement might seem contradictory, this gathering together of like-sensibility hippies can be seen as part of a larger, boundary-erasing metamorphosis. "What we're onto," was the way Joe expressed it, "is a psychic, telepathic thing that closes the space gap between there and here."

In other words, electronic thought patterns traveling at the speed of light would amount to an instantaneous space-vitiating medium. In equally mystical terms, McLuhan repeatedly refers to the new world a-coming as a global electric village. Abstract versions of such configurations are encountered everywhere in the hippie sub-culture. Where initially I met such concepts with annoyance and tended to disregard them because my aim was to piece together an objective picture of the communal movement, I soon learned that it was a subjective phenomenon which demanded a unique analytical approach.

"We're artists—new world artists," said a young California hippie affecting the Arlo Guthrie costume and slouch, "but that's our palette—out there. All the shit and scraps, diamond rings and X-9 hubcaps, and we're going to—presto!" He gestured with his hands, moving about as a shaman. "We're going to make trees, ruby-blood-drop trees, and wild sweet-eating chunks of rock-candy skies and strawberry fields . . ."

The hippie commune is considered a sensory aggregation which is supra-physical, transcending the solid-body reality of the established culture. The

level of interaction is electronic, wherein feeling and form, message and medium, have an implied unity, wherein fantasy becomes a part of the new reality. This is not entirely outlandish, for even traditional science has been filtering across borders of the para-normal and para-psychological. With the brain-wave studies in this country and current work in the Soviet Union on telepathy and psycho-kinesis, the manipulation of material objects by thought concentration has been brought to light. Again how far off is this from exorcism of the Pentagon? And of the theories of Dr. Norbert Wiener, on the transmission of human beings and other solid-body objects in a kind of "teleportation?"

"We're flyin' way out there ahead of them, man—and they're draggin' down our ass!" one ebullient, twenty-year-old New Mexico utopian said to me, angry about the harrassment of the close-by suburban community. "We're careful as hell not to do a thing to get them down on us but our just being around seems to gripe them. The way we look, the Indian beads, long hair and that kind of shit, it's like we're tuned into a different universe and they're afraid. They're afraid of *us*, dig?"

Anthropologist Margaret Mead has written of the need for an entirely new educational system wherein roles would be reversed, with the young teaching the old, the newer generation continually attuning their elders. A hippie communal gathering-of-the-clan with an expanded consciousness may well be the beginning of such a switch-over in roles.

As sung by the Jefferson Airplane rock group, "In loyalty to their kind, they cannot tolerate our minds, and in loyalty to our kind, we cannot tolerate their obstruction." Without question, the most

powerful force for change is the electronic rock rhythm groups. There is an awareness of the importance of *new sounds and the comprehension* of rhythm as a profound biological force regulating the "intra-organic." The new instrumentation, pronouncedly electronic in light and sound, intensely amplified and exploring whole new ranges of expression, points up the primal force driving the new movement, as well as affecting the rhythms of the dominant culture. Rhythm plays a crucial role in the studies of brain waves and self-organizing systems. There is ample evidence that the natural rhythm of living beings is affected by rhythmic changes in the external environment. Unquestionably, this is the level at which the new tribalizers strive to groove, to inter-relate with each other and their surroundings.

The apparent contradiction in Ralph's view of the commune as a predominantly spiritual one, and his aggressively pragmatic performance may perhaps be reconciled. His idea of the movement as a decidedly anti- and preferably an a-materialistic new-style collectivization is completely in accord with the feeling everywhere conveyed to me by commune participants. Even among the infrequently encountered well-organized, efficient, work-oriented groups, their dynamic, *kibbutz*-like rituals seem to belie their transcendental objectives. Ralph seemed to be saying that the commune movement was indeed a revolution of the sensibility, reaching into multi-levels of electronic sensibility where new, more refined unities between man and man, and man and environment were achievable. Unlike the hard science and current technology which tended to lead to a de-personalized or de-sensitized humanity, he claimed the

revolution would restore to its original preeminence the sensibility, the thought-feelings, which lay at the source of the human image-making (fantasy- or myth-making) faculty.

The anti-intellectual hippie's reaction, consonant with Ralph's, is at complete odds with that *kibbutz*-touting, work-imbued champion of rugged individualism, Eric Hoffer. His concept of the intellectual insists upon a combination of those attributes of the feeling-centered transcendentalist, metaphysician and visionary, with any exercise of the intellect which negates man as worker, man as *homo faber*. To Ralph, and to the communal hippie in general, the image-making and visionary force springs from subjective *feelings*. The dictionary definition of "intellect" makes clear that it is a reasoning function "distinguished from will, feeling." To the hippie, the intellect is the technician, the engineer of systems human and otherwise, whose work, no matter how high its level of scientific or scholarly complexity, acts to confirm and to further (in the name of progress) the dominant culture's objective reality. Here now, we come to the crux of Ralph's objection to those verbals or utopian dialecticians, the incessant debaters whose ideas on the nature of community, social structure, tribal origins and utopian ideals would of necessity be arrived at through objective reasoning.

"So we can't hammer a goddamn nail and build a flush toilet," Arnie C., twenty-two and a former Brooklynite, both his parents schoolteachers, said defensively. He was annoyed with my low rating of his mystic-oriented tribe of six young women and four males, which under his leadership had splintered from a far better-organized San Francisco commune. "If that's what it's all about, then I'd go

back to the city, get my law degree and groovy bachelor pad in Manhattan with *two* flush toilets. That's the reason I got these people to split with me and leave. They were going so good—being into several very profitable community enterprises—that they were drifting right back into the bag that we've all dropped out of. We may be a mess organizationally compared to them—but you've got to remember that for what we're trying to do, there aren't any precedents! It's a new kind of organization that we're after, as I see it. A re-organization of everything going on out there is what we're after, and I say it's gotta come from inside us."

Once, in Oregon, a young blonde woman in her later months of pregnancy walked up to me with a beatific look upon her face and extended her dish for me to fill as I helped myself to the communal pot of stew. After I filled her dish, she thanked me, and then said, "Inside, I'm a very beautiful, all-together person and I'm going to have a very beautiful baby." My immediate reaction was disapproving. I had already been witness to two births under fairly primitive conditions on communal properties and had seen the general neglect of commune children, perhaps the most disturbing condition of the growing movement.

Surely she had to know, even more than I did, having been for some time a part of the commune movement, the difficulties she would have to face, not only with birth labor but the problem of maintaining the child and, unless she were an exception to the rule, without any long-term male liaison to share the responsibilities. But how hopeful and secure she was in the conviction that she would manage! And despite the ever-prevalent burden of the physical discomforts of a commune environment,

as well as the tedium of limited diversion and a constant awareness of the dominant culture's hostility, this attitude of an underlying, unalloyed hopefulness was everywhere.

On more than one occasion, this complete trust and blind faith frustrated and angered me. A round-faced, pleasant, bright and talkative eighteen-year-old, Dede H., had invited herself to accompany me part of the way when I left the communal group in New Hampshire. She had only the clothes on her back, though they were sparse enough and there was a chill in the wind, not a penny on her person, and absolutely no objective other than, "This place has gotten to be too heavy a scene and it's time for me to split." She was referring to the efforts of several other members of the settlement to establish a standard work schedule with the assignment of chores for all members. Dede had no destination, announcing to me that she would take the first ride that came along. This, after having told me something about her experiences of ten months with two commune groups, including a period of more than a month in a hospital as a result of having been raped and badly beaten by two men she had hitched a ride with!

If she had been stupid, her totally aimless and thoughtless attitude would have been more comprehensible to me, but she was exceedingly bright —bright enough to have been admitted into Boston University at the age of sixteen. I expressed my reservations about her thumbing a ride in that out-of-the-way place at such a late hour, and I made no bones about alluding to her previous misadventure. But her smile was unperturbed as she remarked, "There's an old proverb, Chinese I guess, about never starting out any journey with

foreboding thoughts. My signs were bad *that* day, anyway." Then with a smile, she gave me a peace sign and went to position herself at a propitious place on the road for oncoming cars.

It was exactly this state of mind which was the bane of the more resourceful commune organizers, because it was a philosophy which opposed planning, reasoning, and common sense. Earlier I would have called this an indication of mental and physical indolence, but others like Ralph and Joe, Sharon and Carol D. put me onto a new communal hippie sensibility which is turned on to a belief or faith in the un-common senses. The new communal breed was suggesting that "seeing is believing," the rule in an objective (object as in solid-body) reality was no longer applicable in an electronic age, and that what appeared to the eyes of those trained in the dominant culture to be unreasoning stupidity was but centered in an as yet inexpressible new belief. But has any profound historical movement, cultural development or great civilization not been founded upon similarly abstruse zealotry?

It did occur to me, as I watched Dede amble away from me with an unconcerned rhythm, that she was marching to the beat of a different drummer. That she was, indeed, typical of those in the hippie communal movement who could silently interact with each other in a strange, indefinably intimate togetherness. They reminded me of ships drifting by each other in the night, intent upon their guiding light.

While to the dominant culture the phrase "turn on tune out" expresses a wholly negative attitude, to the hippie, this and another version, "tune in drop out," mean tuning in to a new level of experi-

ence, with its own positive values, which comes with the dropping out or breaking away from the destructive rhythms of the existing social structure. From this point of view, the hippie commune movement can be seen as a tuning in or pulling together of those sensitive to a drastic counter-rhythm which spells nothing less than survival. Here again, a Jefferson Airplane lyric is pertinent:

But we should be together—
Come on all you people standing around,
Our life's too fine to let it die
And we can be together . . .

I was present at an old established cooperative settlement in Pennsylvania, founded by members of a religious order, which had lately begun to admit hippie commune people on a transient basis. For a time, apparently, there had been no difficulty, as the visitors more or less fit into the work schedules and tempo of the settlement. But then, some complaints developed about hippie hubris and there were accusations of their bad influence on members of the sober, strongly work-oriented religious order. At the time of my stopover, for which I was reluctantly admitted, there were distinctly hostile feelings and there was discussion of a group expulsion of hippie commune types and the imposition of a non-admittance policy (which has since then actually been enforced). Because I could not put my finger upon any specific complaint or incidents, though I tried to in discussions with representatives of each group, I could not satisfactorily identify the basis for contention.

But later I recognized this situation as a clash

between a community functioning according to traditional rhythms which were discordant with the rhythms of the group hippie psyche. Evidently, it was a *strident, intensely germinating* discord. And I asked myself whether this was not analogous to the vehement rejection of the hippie temperament by the dominant culture.

There is a distinct relation between the new rock rhythms and the use of time-sense-altering drugs, for both have tempo change and new rhythms as their focuses. Sharon had made a point of the new communal movement as a psychological pace-setter for altering consciousness through its pot feedback. And even now, I have before me data from *The New York Times* which describes the dramatic increase in drug usage in places as far away as Sydney, Australia, while on the domestic scene note is made of a Pasadena, California, police bust of a farewell party of space scientists at the jet propulsion laboratory. To quote directly from elsewhere in the same article, "In recent months, thousands of Americans—even the Department of Justice doesn't know the exact number—have been arrested for possession of marijuana and the number of arrests appears to be rising. Those arrests included such 'straight' people as athletes, policemen, schoolteachers and suburbanites, as well as teenagers and persons in their twenties."

My observations of the hippie commune movement have convinced me of the relatedness of such diversified phenomena as rock music, drugs, and a new linguistic pattern. Joe the Mystic saw groups such as his own as a spiritual nucleus from which emanations of a new consciousness drifted out to those peripheral—urban and suburban—hippies, and from them into fabric of the dominant culture.

"Electronic communication is where our heads are at," Ralph had said, emphasizing the important difference between the current cooperative settlement trend and any other such past movement in history. I came to see that his purpose was to convey to me an intuitive *feeling* that any grouping together, whether object, person or community, involved intimately relating electron particles. And that feelings on such a level are the more reliable and far richer—more complex sensibility—determinants of a non-combative, non-aggressive, humanizing society. And that in this sense, it is the intellect which is blind. Further, that those factors which are looked upon as disorderly—intuition, pure emotion and sensitivity—lie at the core of the new consciousness.

It was plan that Ralph's communal model, despite his firm insistence upon organization in the established sense, kept the awareness of feelings (the single-most universal feature of the movement) uppermost. He was the first one during my survey who equated feelings with rhythms, and visualized a commune in which group rhythms would be the primary regulator. He described it as an open-end or free-form system, in which group rituals were instituted as the community began to define its group personality.

"It isn't something which can be visualized according to any measure of what exists. It is simply a more intimate, into-each-other relationship and given its head and sufficient protective form only in the beginning as a shelter from the outside community, any group should be able to arrive at these hemostatic or balancing rhythms. Then it becomes a question of automatically feeding back into itself."

"But doesn't our own system perform according to these same principles?"

"Any system functions according to the same basic cybernetic principles," Ralph answered. "But the technostructure, which is what the world is all about out there, has had its center balance imposed from," he pointed to his head, "up here, according to from what we can see and touch. A material culture. With us," his smile was ironic as he patted his groin (a gesture he was fond of) "it has got to be something which arises of itself from the source of our humanism. *Love* has got to be the feedback mechanism of our system. I don't pretend to know exactly what that is and how it's going to work, except that it *is*. Right now, I think that it's something a lot of us feel and that is why we're all together and it does exist, I mean the form of it—somewhere up in our imagination."

This comment of Ralph's recalled to me the manifesto posted by radical students during the much-publicized 1968 violence at the Sorbonne in Paris:

> *The consumer society must perish of a violent death. The society of alienation must disappear from history. We are inventing a new and original world. IMAGINATION is seizing power.*

There is, among those of the dominant culture, an occasional seer, such as the eminent scholar Lewis Mumford, who lends credence to the hippie communal development. His study, *The Myth of the Machine*, establishes the mystical and religious as the founding forces of civilization. It is through the transcendental visionary that the inspirational

images of what is to come are forecast. Nowhere have I ever been accorded so resonant a response to my poetry as among those in the communal scene. The electronic literates, generally down on reading, respond to the poet. Even among those with little formal education, this is typical. And the more complex and esoteric, the more abstract and non-objective, the greater the rapport, the more kinship to their own spaced feeling-talk, grunts, split utterances and in-offensive laying on of hands.

I asked three young women, unself-consciously naked and sharing a creek with myself and four other males, what their ideal commune would be. They were part of a tribal village in Monterey, California. One of them, surprisingly pale and delicate considering her exposure to the sun and outdoors, told me, "It would be like—like one big gang-bang. With everybody into everybody else, all of the time, and everything you did for yourself or anybody else—and you had to be free, anybody did, to do anything you wanted—would be like humping together and spreading all of these good feelings."

As might be expected, it was a remark which provoked much raucous laughter but it reminded me of a section in B. F. Skinner's utopian *Walden Two* (though his calculated, human engineering concepts are antithetical to the force of the new commune movement): "We are utterly free of that institutional atmosphere which is inevitable when everyone is doing the same thing at the same time. Our days have a roundness, a flexibility, a diversity, a flow. It's all quite pleasing and healthful."

But the observer tuned into the hippie communal scene soon comes to recognize the pervasive sexuality as a striving for the achievement of a

more total, continuous union to dilute and desexualize sex itself. To be guided by the new Virgils, such as Allen Ginsberg, through the gross old sense-impressions to loftier plateaus of human consciousness:

What wreaths of naked bodies, thighs and faces,
hairy bun'd vaginas
silver cocks, armpits and breasts
moistened by tears
for 20 years, for 40 years?

Such images become clearer with a reading from Martin Buber's *Paths in Utopia*, dealing with attempts to restructure society: " . . . in alliance with the decentralist counter-tendencies which can be perceived underlying all economic and social evolution, and in alliance with something that is slowly evolving in the human soul: the most intimate of all resistances—resistance to mass or collective loneliness."

LOVE AND PEACE

The two most frequently used words on the communal scene, "love" and "peace," often used interchangeably, are the most vaguely comprehended by those outside of the movement. Among the general hippie population, such a fuzziness of definition is of small consequence but it is an entirely different matter for the communal hippie since the communitarian strives to actualize those concepts. For the dominant culture, love, when the veil of its intentionally romanticized diversion is drawn aside, reveals itself to be cognate with libido, the purely sexual drive which is the initial act in the process of reproduction for the perpetuation of the species. Even in this context, the Biblical injunction from God, "Multiply and replenish the earth," is moral, righteous, and purposeful. Monogamy and the sanctified family serve as the smallest, most orderly and controllable productive unit of the larger

social body. The nuclear family is the micro-community of the high production, high consumption, materially oriented dominant culture.

But gradual evolution of the old stereotypes within the Establishment would seem to counter any need for a radical splintering off of a sub-culture and the development of a new kind of community. After all, statistics on the population explosion have triggered birth control and family planning. Further, we see the bending of tradition by the most rigid institutions, even the organized Church, with the concept of situational ethics. And there is a new spirit of hedonism, typified by the jet set and Hugh Hefner's Playboy philosophy. The parade of sexual liberation is on in full force in the Establishment, and according to one prosperous Midwestern owner of an electronics plant, whose views seem fairly representative, "I'm not a prude. I recognize that changes have to come and we're making them. Anybody who'll open his eyes and look around him can see that. But I say that the only reason these mangy kids are running off to the hills to sleep together in deserted barns is because they do not have what it takes to work and qualify themselves for the kind of rich and varied life which is there for any of us who are willing to pay the price with our own earned credits. Let me tell you, if I were young at a time like this, I wouldn't miss a bet. Sportscars, bachelor pads, and the prettiest and most promiscuous girls. I don't mind admitting that I would have a ball." This latter remark was made within earshot of his stylish, middle-aged, smilingly patronizing wife. Not all of this was expressed in a spirit of pure levity because Mr. R. K. had a son, twenty-two years old, who had dropped out of the Chicago University law

school and drifted into the Southern California commune where I met his parents. They had made a futile trip to persuade the young man to return home and resume the responsibilities "of an advantaged life-style."

For their son, a dark, athletic-looking fellow nicknamed Tonto because of his Indian-braided hair, their presence was obviously embarrassing. Though like others of the group I kept a respectful distance and could not make out the details of their verbal exchange, it was clear to me that his father was willing to make some concessions and offer material inducements to encourage his return to the fold; also, from the older man's angry remark, "God dammit! What the hell *does* he want?" and the despairing parents' abrupt departure, that these were rejected. Viewing the rubble-strewn area, his mother's pained expression seemed to phrase the question, "Is this why we raised him, lavished upon him so much attention and accustomed him to fine things?"

When, on the day following their departure, I did get a chance to get close enough to Tonto and ease him onto the subject, he bitterly denounced his father and all he represented. He called him and his immediate circle of friends and business associates "hypocrites and sickies!" His discontent centered around the direct part they had played in terminating the publication of a local underground newspaper which they deemed pornographic, but in reality, according to Tonto, because it supported the actions and demands of Chicago's black population, even their participation in looting from the stores of local merchants and "grabbing all their shit."

His use of the blacks' own epithet for consumer

merchandise seemed intentional. With some agitation and naiveté typical of the idealistic young communitarian, he restated the argument central to the differences between him and his parents. He clarified his opposition to the Establishment philosophy that "each man is entitled to such possessions as he may purchase according to the earnings of his own labors." To Tonto, "the sooner the values set upon such shit can be destroyed, the better. Anyway, every man is as much entitled as any other to anything on the face of the earth—as a birthright. Like the right to be free and happy and to live in peace in a loving society."

A common declaration among commune participants and, underlying it, an awareness that something in the so-called affluent society has mushroomed out of perspective. That modern man, hooked into the vast machine of the technological structure, is being called upon to expend his precious life stuff in return for superfluous products which are in themselves a waste, and bringing to mind the statement in Stuart Chase's book, *The Most Probable World*, "In the pioneering days of America, everybody had to work hard so that there might be enough to eat. Now, in our affluent condition, as Professor Benjamin Graham suggests, *everybody has to eat hard so that there may be enough work.*" The clear implication, and one fully comprehended by those of the sub-culture seeking to be disengaged from the machine, is that they have been enslaved as consumers to maintain the superproduction quotas of the society.

Joe the Mystic identified "the media mixmasters of Madison Avenue" as "the spellcasting shamans of the plastic society," inviting another Stuart Chase quotation: "The system is no longer inter-

ested in taking all the traffic it will bear, but rather in keeping the traffic well-heeled and healthy so that it can continue to absorb the system's massive output. To persuade the consumer to buy ever more sportscars, swimming pools, second houses, power mowers, air conditioners, and colored television sets as a major goal of the system, and the persuasive specialists on Madison Avenue provide able assistance toward this goal. Leisure, contemplation, satisfaction with what one has, are not to be tolerated."

"To all ye who enter here is love freely accepted and freely given," reads the wood-burned letters of the overhead crossbar entrance into a Northern California commune founded by an attractive, female, former recording artist, Alice C., member of a moderately successful rock ensemble. When I admired the spirit of the message over the entrance and she claimed it as both her own sentiment and handiwork, I asked her, "In which way or ways would you distinguish what passes for love on the outside from your own concept of love?"

She reacted with an unbecoming cynicism, perhaps because my question did not rule out the possibility of such a genuine emotion within the Establishment. Her sharp retort was that what passed for such a sentiment on the the outside was a sham. That love—which she used in a general, all-encompassing sense as the affection of one human being for another—had to be *freely* given in order to qualify as love at all.

"Out in that rat race, it's got a price tag on it. It's used as a reward-and-punishment thing. If I got good grades in school, I was loved—bad grades, no. If I kept my legs crossed, okay. If I had graduated high school and married the schmoe across

the street—yes. I went off and joined a rock group so—no. It's turned on and off in everyone's face like an electric lightbulb, depending on if you go along with the Establishment bullshit. That kind of love comes in all kinds of shapes and sizes. As high regard or status and prestige or even honor, if you distinguish yourself playing it their way. Whatever it is you do, it's got to be what they consider constructive, like a contribution to keeping the lousy situation going in the same lousy way."

This rejection of love as a reinforcement of behavior productive to the system is everywhere confirmed on the commune scene. It is seen as perhaps the most grievous fault of the dominant culture since it deprives an individual of the highly prized hippie ideal, doing one's one thing. And it is obvious that a genuine attempt is consistently being made among communitarians to overlook eccentric and often noxious behavior.

A commandment on the subject of love, more succinct than Alice's artful rendering, was set forth on a mimeographed sheet by the young, bearded and bespectacled twenty-nine-year old Methodist minister, guiding spirit of a Massachusetts experimental living group. "Love me not for what I am," it stated, "but love me *because* I am."

The crucial difference is unmistakable. Love in the communal movement is a binding force inherent as a birthright, along with a right to earthly goods. Everything in the dominant culture is conditional upon an earned productivity, the exhortation being, "Exert your own labors according to subscribed rules and the value system, and by that measure acquire so much profit in goods and affection. Love is meaningful only insofar as it is productive." A similar statement but with an illumina-

cus. They frowned upon the intellectual objectivity of *homo sapiens*. Their one ace, stubbornly and strictly adhered to, was the *feeling* man, *homo sensibilicus*, with a mystical intuitive notion of love.

An insight which I found especially elucidating in this connection came from Ralph. He admitted to me that initially, because of his education in the physical sciences, he had been put off by the mysticism in the movement, the communitarian susceptibility to premonition and dependence upon intuition. His own breakthrough had come about in a very simple way when he suddenly recognized the common root of those two words which seemed to be a manifestation of the most irreconcilable philosophical polarities. *Science* on the one hand, and *conscience* on the other.

"I never stopped to give it any thought and with all my education in the scientific disciplines," Ralph said, "I never looked up the word 'science.' When I did, I saw that it was a derivation of the Latin 'to know,' and it had to do with objective or outward knowledge. What conscience is all about, is *inward* knowledge. That's what intuition is all about, you dig? And Einstein himself said that any truly great scientific discovery has got to come first from intuition."

The reliance upon abstraction is both difficult and disturbing since those minds trained in the Establishment's educational process recognize only the intellect as the device for rational analysis. For all of my empathy with the movement and my own poetic nature, it was some time before I found myself able to go beyond the superficial and frequently affected hocus-pocus into a deeper examination of what was being conveyed to me, before I began to see that the new kind of communication, leading

to interaction, was truly the bond of a new kind of community.

Sally, nineteen years old and one of the new commune drifters, told me about her more than twenty-five acid trips, describing the nature of the LSD-altered consciousness simply and effectively. "It's like, you know, those old paintings. Well, that's the way I see everything everyday, like real, objective, right? You know, like the stuff painted by the old masters. A photograph, giving you back what your eye sees. But with acid, it's like—like, say, Picasso, only wilder—really outasight. Like, I guess, non-objective art. The objects are all re-scrambled. I mean, they're not really one kind of thing. They can be anything, depending on how it comes together in your head."

Futz had said, in her perpetually pornographic monologue, "When a guy has his dick in me and I feel that I'm really where it's at, it's like having an electric wire jazz me where nothing else can reach. The womb of the world!" She had laughed aloud and flung her arms heavenward.

Arthur H., in his frank discussion of the sexual relationships within the corporate family, sounded a note, despite a more rational tone, not unlike that of Futz's. "We look at it this way. A form of physical love that is chained to sexual reproduction is hardly human love at all. Or maybe I should say, only the tiniest glimpse of its humanizing potential. I think if that's what we were like—that was nature's only intention for us—then we would have brief periods of heat like most animals and we'd copulate only for the purpose of bearing children. But as I understand it from reading that book by Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape*, the human body is unique. It is always receptive to sexual

contact, and it does seem to be the logical explanation for why we're totally hairless, as Morris suggests, so that we can be more sensuous, with all our erogenous zones exposed. So we have this potential for the deepest kind of intimacy and it makes no sense whatever, the more those in our group think about it and talk about it, for us to live monogamously. Obviously, the morality part of it has been socially imposed so that so long as physical love spells out reproduction, there will be a sense of family responsibility. But we can learn to experience that most affecting of all sensations, to feel it, be moved by it, anytime and with any willing partner. Relieved of guilt, it has got to be the one truly humanizing experience, as I see it. I really believe that. I think that physical love is the basis of esthetics. And I'm not talking about couples in the suburbs going at it like naughty kids playing dirty games of switch. To get a picture of what I'm talking about, all you have to do is ask yourself the question, 'What is the ultimate of being *together?*' It has got to be the coupling of human beings, body and soul. It's there where it all begins. Where it's always beginning."

I once overheard a lesbian scatologically holding forth on the subject of heterosexuality in an East Village pad. "You want a picture of male-female sex that will stay with you? There's this army of guys—cunt destroyers—forever getting off their guns in female flesh. An explosive orgasm and their ammunition is delivered. It enters the womb, explodes the ovum—and that's what war is all about." She went on to say that "love should be a healing force, and continuous." Her implication was unmistakable. Sex as reproduction was destructive and not an ennobling experience. Her

own homosexuality brings me to an interesting observation of the two diametrically opposed sexual trends within the Establishment. The prevalence of male homosexuality and its fashionable acceptance, and the rapidly growing women's liberation movement testify to a hostile dichotomy, while on the hippie scene, and everywhere among communitarians the reverse is the case. Here, the trend is uni-sexual. They disregard differences in attire, in attitude, in gesture and manner, in outlook and general behavior. Many are misled by the hippie uni-sexual influence on the dominant culture, but close scrutiny discloses that it is exceedingly superficial and more a matter of fashion. In the Establishment, the real pressures are for polarization. The presence of homosexual female vitriol, not to be encountered within the commune movement, is a festering wound in the reigning culture. This excerpt from the *SCUM Manifesto* of Valerie Solanas, founder of the Society for Cutting Up Men, is an extreme example for this schism,

Those females least embedded in the male "culture" . . . who are too childish for the grown-up world of suburbs, mortgages, mops, and baby shit, too selfish to raise kids and husbands, too uncivilized to give one shit for anyone's opinion of them other than their own, too arrogant to respect Daddy, the "greats" or the deep wisdom of the Ancients, who trust only their own animal, gutter instincts, who equate Culture with chicks, whose sole diversion is prowling for emotional thrills and excitement, who are given to disgusting, nasty, upsetting "scenes," hateful violent bitches given to slamming those who unduly irritate them in the teeth, who'd sink a shiv

into a man's chest or ram an icepick up his asshole as soon as look at him, if they knew they could get away with it, in short, those who, by the standards of our "culture," are SCUM . . .

SCUM will not picket, demonstrate, march or strike to attempt to achieve its ends. Such tactics are for nice, genteel ladies who scrupulously take only such action as is guaranteed to be ineffective . . . If SCUM ever marches, it'll be over Nixon's stupid, sickening face; if SCUM ever strikes, it'll be in the dark with a six-inch blade.

Another excerpt comes from the letter of a friend I made in that same group where I witnessed the confrontation between Tonto and his parents. Laura B., a sensitive and lovely former textile designer, mother of a commune-born two-year-old child, recently wrote to me in a somewhat despairing mood. Having come down with hepatitis, she had been compelled to return to the home of her parents in Los Angeles. She described the period as a difficult one, and spoke of her hasty return to the communal scene (from where the letter was addressed):

. . . I don't know exactly what is happening because I can't put my finger on it. But it's happening and if you were in L.A. recently, then you know what I mean. Probably it's the same bad scene in New York, maybe worse. Everything feels like it's breaking off and falling apart. It's as if what has been inside us as humans has been stretched too far and it's breaking off. This pollution thing, what has now become this big ecology movement. You hear it everywhere like a cliché, that man has been separated from his en-

vironment. But isn't this kind of separation every place you look? How about between the races? Or this new woman-power issue that's hotting up in L.A. I call it the sex split. But isn't it really all part of one thing that's going on and has everything to do with what somebody said (was it Camus?), "All disintegration follows man's spiritual alienation from the universe," or something like that. But I never felt it like I did this last time, total coming apart. And I felt, I really felt! For the first time that chasing my tail off to the hinterlands was not just an escape. But it was more like a positive action of finding a place with kindred souls—to come together. I really think that's what the kids here, all of us, are doing. In some way, that's a lot more than some figure of speech, but something very organic? They're trying to stop that splintering off of everything and come together. I don't mean to say that conditions here are any better than what they were when I left. It isn't easy for Janie and I often feel guilty about it, but what great gift would I be giving her by going back to the L.A. cesspool? Good God! I wish we could shape up around here—get a little organized.

Another friend of mine, a psychologist at the Institute of Behavioral Studies in Maryland, once remarked to me about cultural movements—evolving and dissolving societies, "as a continuous fission-fusion process." With the new developing culture fusing, coming together, as the old culture fragmented, split apart as in the fission process. "Come together—right now!" the rock lyric sings from the center of the hippie psyche.

In Tonto's terms, the root of evil of the domi-

nant society was its continuous production of ever greater surplus. To Arthur H. and the lesbian, reproduction was a matter of a splitting process for the creating of surplus. Sex as reproduction represents a multiplication of bodies, creating surplus biological energy. Thus, the notion of reproduction and production as the surplus-energy building basis of the dominant culture is a significant communitarian one.

Laura recognized the value of human labor in her longing for less primitive communitarian living conditions. With Ralph, his exhortations to provoke those around him into activity to improve communal self-sufficiency were a chronic source of group irritability. Everybody seemed to want the comforts of the more orderly state that human labor could produce. Yet, those communes bent upon such objectives were pronounced oppressive and soon became prohibitive to work-oriented, kibbutz personalities. In short, physical comfort has value, but the price, in terms of the dedication of body energy to labor, is too high.

Was it merely a matter of laziness, to echo the general sentiments of the Establishment? Or did the hippie communitarians sense that in this paradox was the crux of their salvation? The new communitarian recognized, at some inexpressible level of subliminal consciousness, that the labor-oriented, surplus-building society was the source of its own alienation, that it was "fission-able," fragmented and bursting apart.

But if love is the binding force of human communion and if the human community can not be sustained without a commitment of this force to labor for physical survival, is the new breed already skewered on an unresolvable dilemma?

Those active on the communal scene are aware of the problem. But the best they have to offer is faith—an intuitive belief that somewhere there is an answer and that they are moving in its direction.

In several instances where I had occasion to visit communal groups where this problem did not exist, I was confronted with a strange anomaly. They were extraordinarily well organized and highly productive—two of them being cooperative settlements and the third, an extended family with twenty-eight adults and five children. For anyone seeking a positive picture of the hippie communal scene, these could serve as examples of self-sufficiency. Furthermore, their atmospheres, rituals and relationships would certainly not distress even the most traditionalist observers from the Establishment. There would be many compliments forthcoming, with a high score for sanitation and hygiene, enterprise and industry.

In one of these settlements, in Oregon, a stocky, blond and sun-tanned Barney R., age thirty-one, who looked and talked like a highly competent farm boss, spent almost three hours with me, touring their grounds and buildings. They had begun with seven borrowed acres and now owned their own property—twenty-nine acres! Mortgaged, of course, but successfully keeping up the payments, and, but for two busts by local police, their relations with the Establishment community were excellent.

However, for research I found this and the other two groups to be uninstructive. In self-made clothing, self-made candles and pottery, the extended family group (with a predominance of females, reminiscent of early Mormonism) emphasized group economy over a free-reigning sensibility, and

showed a resumption of the same early steps of the dominant culture. Such groups, with their temporary hiatus from the encroaching technology, can only be seen as living their pastoral existence on borrowed time. Joe the Mystic expressed it well. "DDT, Madison Avenue, and TV flicks are in our eyeballs, in our bones and teeth, and no sauna, PhisoHex, Esalen or country trip is going to deliver the purifying enema. There's no place to hide. We need a new kind of magic."

Sifting and assembling this material, I began to wonder whether the means for realizing the new magic have not been with us for some time. About the hippie communitarians' distaste for physical labor as a misuse of vital energies, I am reminded of a statement by Dr. Norbert Wiener in his book, *The Human Use of Human Beings*, which says, in effect, that if all that man had to sell on the marketplace was his muscle energy or physical labor, then he had nothing that was worth one's money. He was referring to the take-over of such labors by servo-mechanisms. And the famous British scientist, J. Bronowski, has indicated that he already foresees very small communities centered around a freely circulating nuclear energy plant, very small in dimension. "It is not necessary to retreat from the disaster of the megalopolis into the inertia of the rural village."

There would be free flow of energy maintaining the economics of an objective reality, with the release of these energies through new multi-levels of human consciousness where love is the binding force . . . A dream? Perhaps. But dreams are visions and the true hippie communitarians are our most far-out visionaries. With the scientists, those makers of visions not far behind, who can tell? Al-

ready some of these especially fine minds, tuned like delicate antennae, are picking up the vibrations of the hippie communitarians. Such a one is Dr. Margaret Mead. From her new book, *Culture and Commitment:*

> *Her we can take a cue from the young who seem to want instant utopias. They say the future is now. It seems unreasonable and impetuous, and in some of the demands they make it is unrealizable in concrete detail; but here again, I think, they give us the way to reshape our thinking. . . . The freeing of man's imagination from the past depends on the development of a new kind of communication with those who are most deeply involved with the future—the young who were born in the new world. . . . Although I have said they know these things, perhaps I should say that this is how they feel. . . . Today, nowhere in the world are there elders who know what the children know, no matter how remote and simple the societies are in which the children live. In the past there were always some elders who knew more than their children in terms of their experience of having grown up within a cultural system. Today there are none . . . there are no elders who know what those who have been reared within the last twenty years know about the world into which they were born.*

As for the new ways to communicate of which Dr. Mead speaks, one becomes aware that the concept of communication is radically different. To those of the established culture, it is a word pro-

cess of exchange of information. To the hippie, the separation between information and form, communication and community, does not exist. It is a concept which I found difficult to grasp because my own antenna, still attached to Establishment programming, responded only to those vibrations which presented me with a rational picture.

Sensing this in my attitude, the wild-eyed (I suspected the use of meth or speed), heavily hirsute and dreadfully thin California tribal seer snapped at me, "You don't belong around here. You are into *the cult of the physical.*" At the time, I was contemptuous of his condescension, having learned from several members of his group that his credentials for the exalted status of tribal oracle included little or no formal schooling, and the trade of automotive mechanic. I considered him one of those outright frauds who infiltrate the scene and form small tribal groups, dominating naiveté and idealism with guile and calculation. He did not order my discharge from the group in so many words—but his hostility from that one brief encounter triggered an instant feedback to the others and I was given the freeze-out.

Now, in retrospect, I am not so sure about his fraudulence. It may be true that, cunning in the ways of the world, so to speak, he could, more quickly than the others, size up my objective or, in his idiom, gig. He immediately observed my identification with the Establishment's "cult of the physical" as antagonistic to his own tribal "cult of the *metaphysical.*" The familiar dictionary definition of the word "metaphysical" is "beyond the physical or material; incorporeal, supernatural, or transcendental," specifically dividing or separating the substantial and material from ideas or visions.

But the message passionately conveyed by the communitarian is that he refuses to suffer the abuse of such a division, indeed, that the entire nature of alienation—as Laura enumerated: ecological, racial, sexual—erupts from this defect.

"What they want," the editor of a Massachusetts newspaper confided in me with a trace of paternalistic sarcasm, "is instant happiness." I had gone to see him in an effort to explain the unfairness of the local community harrassment which provoked a series of police busts on a newly developing communal group. I thought that some editorial sympathy, evoking the revered name of their home-grown sage, Thoreau, might help to ease community pressure. But the editor, who was also co-owner of the newspaper, while identifying himself as an independent spirit, was deeply imbued with the Calvinistic reap-what-you-sow work ethic. And angry as I was for his cavalier dismissal, I could not reasonably counter his miniscule definition of the commune goal. Instant happiness was really what it was all about.

Short, dark-haired, New Yorker Robert K., still another leftover from the Woodstock rock festival communal scene, used this statement as an indictment of his father's life-style: "He served thirty-five years of hard labor on that rock pile people call Manhattan. The whole damn place is a penitentiary for serving time, except they call it being in business. So our family has this textile dyeing firm, and my father wants my brother and me, he's two years older, to come in and operate the business. So he can go out and travel and relax. And I like the way he puts it, 'so I can go out and see the world a little.' He's sixty-two years old, bald, with a pot, and I doubt that he can remember the last

time he got a hardon; the poor bastard wants to have a fling. Sure I feel sorry for him. But what am I supposed to do—piss my own young life down the drain while waiting for that parole called retirement?"

Just another of the thousand variations on the same theme: life is now. Every moment is as valid as any other, and whatever pleasure there is should be immediately extracted. There should be no investment by foregoing pleasure for hard work in order to realize a pleasure profit at the end of a lifetime. It may seem totally impractical, but then, practicality is itself declared anathema. And the entire Establishment structure is looked upon as a vast machine in which postponed individual pleasure is invested in the form of hard labor, to receive, in the end, a glittering reward of SUCCESS, which is pleasure with compound interest, and the further promise of eternal pleasure, in Heaven.

Arthur H., of the corporate family, talked of inter-family sexual relations as a release of the pleasure of physical love from reproductive function. Futz accepted her body as a vehicle for pleasure. Everywhere on the commune scene, pleasure, good feelings, good vibes, are not a means toward any committed end. Pleasure is in itself both the means and the end. Communication is community. Ralph's intra-organic utopian model suggests the same. And although the tendency, according to the Establishment, is to "draw the blinds of the mind," Dr. Mead's words on the future-seeing young admonish otherwise, as well as statements such as those of Dr. Herbert A. Otto, chairman of the National Center for the Exploration of Human Potential: "Our creative capacities may well be infinite, but how can we learn to utilize them when 'nega-

tive conditioning' limits our confidence and our approach to life?"

This hippie utopian concept of instant pleasure leads us into the strangely confirming avenues of hard science researching the cerebral centers of pleasure and pain. Following the location of those areas in the brain, clinical studies have proceeded to electrically and chemically stimulate them so that without the performance of any physical action, a sensation may be induced. Might not the body, with its productive and reproductive ends, be the analogue for the technological Establishment? Dr. Dean Wooldridge, in his highly regarded work, *Machinery of the Brain*, alights on this not so fanciful notion that we may indeed come upon Heaven and Hell in our own brains.

Love—physical, communal and spiritual—manifest as the most valued ideal, may indeed be pleasure itself. We speak of loving to eat, loving beauty, and loving sex, and with the hippie communitarian, there is the ultimate love of loving. Pleasure as a reward for productive functions is frowned upon. There is no defense for pleasure or love as an earned object. "Love me because I am," was the exhortation of the communitarian minister. Tonto referred to love as the Establishment's reward-and-punishment instrument, as did Alice, with her fire-etched declaration about love freely given.

The dialogue between those members of the incubating Massachusetts community reflecting on their problem of community harassment and hostility as they accompanied me to the newspaper editor's office, is also pertinent here. "They hate us because we know how to have fun. We're always enjoying ourselves," ventured the braided and bell-

bottomed, twenty-three-year-old daughter of a Harvard history professor.

"It's because we love everybody, including them, even when they hate us. I think that in some way, it makes them afraid of us," said her youthful male consort.

Pleasure is an end in itself, to be constantly indulged in without being "earned," and love should also be disengaged from society's judgmental punishment-and-reward system. These ideas crystallize the basis for the hostility and fear of the dominant culture for they attack the entire basis of its value system. When leisure and love are forthcoming as a birthright and not as an inducement for production the entire production-oriented Establishment is threatened, and it becomes clear why the reaction is one of moral outrage.

Observing perhaps ten or a dozen people I was sitting with around a small wood-burning stove in a large pyramidal tent, inert, hardly exchanging a word, an odd thought passed through my mind, something I had read, by Matthew Arnold: "What if our urgent work now is, *not* to act at any price, but rather to lay in a stock of light for our difficulties?" It was in a New Mexican settlement started by a New York couple, both artists, who had taken a place in the area and then had begun, without any plan, taking in hippie drifters. As explained to me by an attractive young woman huddled under an Indian blanket and smiling ruefully, "There got to be so many of us around that we practically took over and so they moved on out. I guess, back to New York City, and we—most of us, we stayed on."

Every once in a while, she would stand up and step up to the stove in the center of the group and

open her arms wide, unfolding the blanket to admit the heat to her body. She was completely naked but there were no remarks, nor undue attention.

I had been witness to many, many such situations among different groups, and it was not that there was less than an ordinary interest in sexual matters. On the contrary, my early impressions were that there was considerably more sexual activity, and then, eventually, I realized that this impression had been heightened because of the obviousness of their sexual acts. They would take place almost anywhere, casually, among people sleeping, dozing and others talking. Or a couple partly concealed behind the bushes in daylight. Occasionally, there was some sexual play between couples while bathing. Such instances, of course, do have a way of sharply pointing themselves out to an eye conditioned to the shroud of secrecy, concealing physical intimacy as a forbidden act.

At the same time, there was, with far greater frequency, a tendency to orgiastic behavior in tribal groups or among the least organized communes, usually during the evening or dark, early morning hours. Likely a social carry-over, this preference for the protectiveness of "the nocturnal curtain." As for the greater frequency of orgiastic behavior in the tribal relationship, I felt that the more primitive the state of the group, the more non-verbal and subliminal their interaction, and, I would guess, such groupings involved a surrender of a measure of individual identity, perhaps because of the presence of a patriarchal leader or chieftain. There is, in such groups, a distinct sense of physical and spiritual conjoining, as though all were organs within one social body.

I was present when an argument ensued between

two males, and when one physically attacked the other, he was joined by at least five or six others who severely beat the fallen person while others in the group, arousal stirring their faces, stood idly by. It was an ugly, bestial act, a lynch mob, and a scene from which I hastily separated myself. It was decidedly uncharacteristic of the hippie communal sensibility which abhors brutality in any form. In isolated instances where brutal bullying types—pseudo hippies—invaded the scene, others, no matter what their number, would rather suffer domination than fight back. I do not believe it to be cowardice but rather, so deep an abhorrence of violence that it triggers a turn-off.

On the whole, unrestrained sexuality is prevalent, in body contact, language, gesture and general behavior. And yet I sensed a kind of asceticism among these communitarians undressing, bathing and freely exposing themselves during various activities, without any overt or exaggerated sexuality. Where climate and principal conditions permit, group practice of hygienic functions encourages more natural behavior.

However, at certain times I would find myself convinced that hyper-sexuality on the communal scene *was* the norm. In a Massachusetts communal dwelling which seemed on the surface a model of decorum, two young women, one rather plain and the other attractive in a totally non-exhibitionistic way, arose and announced that they were ready to engage in sexual relations. "Anyone who wants to get laid can meet us upstairs."

Some of the responses were pleasantly risqué but there was no commotion, and a few casually started up the stairs after them. During the remainder of the evening other young women went

upstairs, with an eventual exchange of partners taking place. All the while other activities continued peacefully about the large house, TV-watching for three small children and several of the adults, a chess game, newspaper and magazine reading, and the preparation of the following day's menu in the kitchen.

In the commune where Futz was present, on either my second or third night there, I was awakened to witness an amusing situation. Apparently, one of the fellows had made advances upon one of the girls sleeping and she had properly protested. Then another young woman awoke to intercede on his behalf. "Go ahead and let him. Don't you see that he has a hardon for you?" she persuasively reasoned. Her case effectively pleaded, she promptly returned to sleep, as did I.

A sun-bleached surfing type, drawing me aside to fill me in on Alice and the kind of place that I had fallen into—she apparently provided the food and necessities from her recording income—told me, "She's a very groovy chick and that's the way she wants this place to be. About two weeks ago, she ran a snottly little uptight bitch right outa here. None of the guys could make it with her and there were real bad feelings about her. Alice heard it, picked up her shit and told her to split. First time I ever saw her do that. This is a restaurant," he quipped, "where you can even get Alice."

There were no signs of promiscuity insofar as I could make out during the week and a half which I spent with this group, in as nearly idyllic an atmosphere as one could hope for. What was important to Alice, and is significant generally on the communal scene, is that there should not be any disproportionate concentration on sexual behavior.

And to admit someone with persistent Establishment hangups into the group is to circulate bad vibes. Free love freely given is a fact of life here.

In the productive society of the dominant culture, love is on condition or commitment (reproduce/produce or be unloved). Love is the approving finger on the trigger. The objective of the hippie utopian is to totally disorder and then re-order the signals, so that love might be freely applied at any time, hopefully, at all times, as a continuous and natural condition, liberated totally from productive commitment.

JAMMING THE ESTABLISHMENT SIGNALS

A mixup of signals, like the jamming of the radio frequency that broadcasts the Establishment voice, is proceeding, affecting every link in the carefully ordered sequence of tradition. Here, nakedness and shocking promiscuity, here, a wholly childlike innocence, here, a poetry of pornography. A reverential orgy. Here—presto!—prodigious group labor (as actually occurred in one instance) to construct the world's largest artificial flower, a group project for pleasure's sake, the pure joy of it!

For the first time, I understood the concept which sociologists refer to as "the nuclear family." Mother and father signified wedlock, reproducing for the production of community surplus. "Wreck the nuclear family, the adhesive for the entire Establishment structure, and it will all come tumbling down!" The new communitarians are at it, their spirit and action feeding back to the domi-

nant culture. No marriage or love commitment of any kind. No permanent family. No education to maintain the machine for surplus production.

"Spike the machine!" was the gist of Tonto's message. These are also the tactics of the myopic militants and political activists. But, as Sharon of the Oregon commune had declared, contrary to the communitarians' chosen weapon of the psyche, they are into the same materialistic power struggle, seeking but an exchange of controlling hands. The communitarian way is a tune-out and drop-out from the machinery, an exorcism of all its parts and gears in the way of Mystic Joe, via Allen Ginsberg. Or the Abbie Hoffman Yippie way of demythologizing power—tearing up money and showering the New York Stock Exchange with the confetti-shredded bits. As those seers like Norman Mailer understood from their vantage point within the Establishment, who said, as a defense witness for the Chicago 8, to describe the Yippie strategy of symbolic attack, "I understood that you don't attack the fortress anymore. Just surround it and make faces at the people inside and let them have nervous breakdowns and destroy themselves."

"Let's do it in the road!" urges the Beatles' song. I saw exactly that on the buckboard where I'd accompanied Sarah R., and her group into Los Angeles to buy supplies. One couple shouted to the driver to stop. Leaping down from the truck, to the accompaniment of laughter and urging of the others, they lay themselves down on the road and engaged in a frenetic copulatory act. This was done on the spur of the moment, and apparently for no other purpose than for laughs and to stir up excitement. But I read something else into their performance. Even if their erotic revel was performed on

a deserted back road, it was no less meaningful a gesture of defiance. Significantly, the word "revel" is derived from *rebellare*, to wage war again; and reveling in erotic and orgiastic behavior was to declare war on the Establishment's moral code.

And yet, nowhere can it better be seen than among the hip communitarians that old habits, wired into the reflexes, die hard. They do not "go gently into the night." For all Arthur H.'s glowing accounts of the spirit of sexual liberation within the corporate family, a young instructor of economics in the same group confided to me that they had recently been involved in a situation centered on this problem.

"It had become so emotional an issue that it came near to dissolving our entire living arrangement." As he described it, it was one of the most common suburban family situations. The husband in one couple made advances to the wife of another. And then all of the stereotyped reactions asserted themselves: jealous rage, accusations, and so on. The situation finally resolved itself when both couples, with their respective children—two in one family and three in the other—left the group.

It would appear that communal family arrangements such as this corporate group, so tightly bound to Establishment customs, maintain and defend the productive nuclear family. But though they seem largely transitional, they serve the valuable purpose of weakening the moral strictures of those most tradition-oriented.

Complications of such an emotional nature are not, however, limited to communitarians bent upon "playing the mama-papa family game" (a memorable phrase of Robert K., Woodstock Festival dropout). Ralph, the cybernetics utopian, had made

an effort to remove from the group a female partner of his who frequently exchanged sexual alliances. His justification was that her presence tended to generate disharmony. One might imagine that Ralph would not have the temerity to take up such an issue before the communal forum since it might appear to be selfishly motivated and an effort to control and censure another's behavior. But my inclination is to recognize Ralph's action as motivated by the same genuine communitarian interests as Alice's in discharging that rigidly recalcitrant female.

The communal ideal is extra-sexual. A communion of persons more intimate than the sexual connection on a physical plane. The body is not only an end-purpose but a vehicle for a profounder, all-enveloping force. The promiscuous Futz of the Northern California commune told of her conversion to near nymphomania as a result of an acid trip revelation, and her reasons suggested an extra-physical experience. "It's like having all this life energy flowing through me."

"'To fuck or not to fuck' is definitely *not* the question. Not with us. That's an Establishment hangup," I was told by an East Villager whom I fell into a discussion with in the Peace Eye bookstore about the hard-porn papers, *Screw*, etc. His reason for the papers was, "To poke out the eyes of the system with our dicks. Look at Denmark," he said, citing that Scandinavian country which, in removing all censorship and unleashing a tide of pornographic literature, had in a period of some eight months dried up such an interest in the Establishment marketplace.

"Fuck—it's just like a hammer cracking open your skull. What an ugly word for something so

beautiful," the sweet-faced, seventeen-year-old from the besieged Massachusetts commune said to a group of us. A recent letter to the underground newspaper the *East Village Other* reveals the demythologizing process at work to rid the word "fuck" of the magic and special taboo consigned to it by the Establishment. The correspondent, however, does not seem to realize that her protest is in the service of the dominant culture, which uses the word, as it does all language, to conserve its traditional structure.

> Dear EVO Sweeties,
>
> As an old maid English teacher who uses your rag in class, I'd like to, like, come to the defense of the grand old Anglo-Saxon root word, *fuck*. I mean, you know, like I groove to backwards poetry, but the constant use of that lovely *fuck* as a pejorative is getting to me. Why not *agnew you*, or whoever's available locally, certainly no shortage of such terms, anywhere, and reserve *fuck* for positive connotations, like, "that fucking Latimer"! You kids are screwing up the language.
>
> Swyve you (as Chaucer wid say).
>
> *Joyce Benson*
> *Jericho Hill*
> *Alfred, New York*

There does seem to be an ebbing of lustful desire in the communes, and such a gentleness came through to me in the beginning as an unpleasant passivity which I attributed to many other causes. For a time, I thought that their meagre diet might

be to blame, but my own continuous dependence upon the same fare did not produce any commensurate reaction. I had also considered malnutrition as the culprit of their generally stepped-down libido. How else to account for so many missed opportunities, provocative nudity, and body contacts casually ignored? That was before I recognized the deliberate scramble of sexual signals. But I still am not willing to accept this as a wholly satisfactory explanation for so much of the daily activities and relationships on the hippie communal scene belie so many of their declared ideals.

It does become comprehensible, however, if one recognizes that the hip commune is in a highly fluid stage. As a disgruntled, hungry and asthmatic Monterey communitarian claimed, they were "caught in a squeeze-play between knocking the Establishment and nit-picking their supermarket garbage to stay alive."

The difficulty of their state and much of the contradiction in their behavior is better revealed by another kind of squeeze-play—within themselves. They represent an intermediate or transitional breed, onto a new sensibility, but still tightly programmed to their Establishment upbringing. They seek to break up the monogamous love bond which maintains the nuclear family, but they still show jealousy, bruised ego and attempts to assert "claims" as a result of satisfactory intimacies. "No ties" is the code, and yet the despair of separation following some illegitimate births has been poignant and terrible to behold. The separation of sexuality from reproduction is the communitarian way of breaking pleasure's shackles, and yet the strongly maternal female is in much evidence.

A somewhat bedraggled though not unattractive

young woman in her mid-twenties, of that same New Mexico group of the pyramidal tents, confided, "Sometimes I wish—I wish I could have a little place, kids and a husband—the whole works." Then she frowned, as if caught in the ultimate blasphemy. It is an expression I have seen many times on the faces of commune females, as well as a few males, especially those who enjoy playing with and caring for—sort of adopting—children wandering about the commune area.

One such, a burly, heavily bearded, booted and Mackinaw-jacketed young man in a California commune, took up a youngster, a child about two or three, in his arms. Later, seeing the child playing quietly with several tin cans amid the rubble, he knelt down beside him. He removed a kerchief from his pocket and wiped the nasal discharge from the small boy's lips and chin. Noting that the youngster had defecated where he sat, the young man proceeded to wipe his behind, and flung the kerchief away. He turned as I approached and, seeing my expression of disgust at the neglect of the youngster, he said, "There are times when I wonder what these kids are going to be like when they grow up. So much hate building up inside them." Then he added with a rueful grin, "Maybe they'll ban together and . . ." he gestured with his hands as though sweeping a machine gun across his line of vision to the accompaniment of rat-a-tat sounds, "and exterminate us. It sounds like some kind of science-fiction story. Children of the hippies."

This is not the invariable lot of all children living within the new communitarian environment. Of course, the better off are found in the well-organized groups, especially the efficient agrarian settle-

ments in the kibbutz style, and within tightly structured, extended family groups. That is, the child is better off the nearer his commune environment parallels the familial patterns of the dominant culture. The hip commune youngster does develop, of necessity, a surprising steadfastness in the face of much adult behavior which is idiosyncratic and offensive.

Once, with another California group, I retrieved a child, a boy perhaps six years old, who was wandering about and weeping. He would not admit to anything being wrong, nor did he appear to be seeking anyone, and I had the impression that if he was not, it was only because his need for adult attention would be unfulfilled. He quite willingly allowed me to take his hand and seek out his mother, which I was able to do with some difficulty because she was in the woods on a playful tree-climbing expedition with several others. I found her to be a very lovely, dark-eyed and reasonable person. She was affectionate with the boy and quickly restored his spirits, setting him down again to play. Apparently it was nothing more than a problem of plain loneliness. The young woman was not at all hesitant to let me know that the child had no acknowledged father. At the same time, she asserted the advantages of the youngster's attention from many adult males of the group. She seemed to have absorbed some of Bruno Bettelheim's ideas about the advantages of the group-family-raised youngster. She talked of self-reliance and a more rapid maturity for the child—and I learned with surprise that the boy was no more than four years old.

When I asked her whether she was concerned that the boy was left to wander about when there were several male homosexuals in the group, her

response was, "We believe in teaching the child to establish his own identity very quickly and letting him know that he has the same rights as any of us. And there is nothing wrong with exposing him to whatever is out there since he's a lot better able to cope with it than children being brought up in cities and suburbia. Like—like deceptive packaging with nothing inside of real value. You know what Stevie (her youngster) would do if one of those fags came up to him and tried to get him to do something he didn't want? He'd tell him in plain language to fuck off. I've heard him do exactly that. It's because he isn't treated like a non-person—you know, that children should be seen but not heard. But a complete person who doesn't have to tote someone else's horseshit."

This is a mistaken approach, in my opinion, though it is exercised everywhere within the communal movement. A child, during each stage of maturation, is a biologically and psychologically unique being with responses to stimuli quite different from the adult's. However, since the hip communitarian world is psychically alien territory to me, my judgments should not be rendered too hastily. My reaction of protectiveness and paternalism toward the youngster was defensible because I, as an adult, had experiences which the child did not. But would this not mean, as Dr. Mead has suggested, that I would be modeling the child's behavior according to Establishment norms?

The entire configuration of our society is an immensely amplified nuclear family, produced and reproduced between paternalistic and maternalistic polarities. As the eminent sociologist Robert K. Merton has written in his definitive volume, *Social*

Theory and Social Strucure, "It is the family, of course, which is a major transmission belt for the diffusion of cultural standards to the oncoming generation . . . It is, therefore, a mechanism for disciplining the child in terms of the cultural goals and mores characteristic of this narrow range o groups."

The young mothers of communitarian children with whom I have come into contact and the adult males sharing the same environment, can not, by any stretch of the imagination, be condemned as unfeeling, non-humanitarian people. On the contrary, their dominant characteristic is, if anything, an excess of feeling, a profound reverence for humanity. This is why Ralph's commune bread-baker, the mother of two, described the young men and women around her as possessing a profoundly religious sensibility. Through "peace and love" they wish to save humanity by restoring to it its lost—or rapidly waning—humanitarianism. One can apply the adjective "sweet" to these people, to underscore the nature of the generally loving communitarian environment. And it is a love without productive levers or intent.

"Isn't she like a beautiful golden flower? That's the way I want her to grow up to be—as pure and sweet as a flower, all sun and clear water, no poisoned air or mean feelings . . ." But this same mother was capable of allowing her attentions to waver from her child for hours, even a day or more, to go off into the woods for tree-climbing, or to make love or go on a lark in some nearby town, with the child casually left to the others of the group. Upset as I was by this circumstance, I can not say that communitarian children are inferior to those raised in the dominant culture. From what I could see, the

communal youngster, in spite of the apparent neglect, is healthier or certainly as healthy.

Once when I looked askance at the diet which Laura fed her child—brown rice with fragments of whatever was available, greens, bits of fish, chicken or meat—she became incensed by my implication that she might be living the life she chose at the expense of her child. Her retort was classic: "I could get a job and a room, put the child in a day-nursery. The beginning of packaged regimentation of alphabetical faces and standard uniforms and a measure of I.Q according to how efficiently the child learns to run the Establishment maze. And what highly prized advantages! Food sprayed, canned, jarred, chemically treated, artificially colored. Maybe, if the child is lucky, two or three hours a day in an outdoors choking with carbon monoxide and every kind of pollution you can think of. And racing like a sonovabitch—for what? No matter how you name it, it all comes down to the same thing—M-O-N-E-Y. The whole idea in the beginning had to be to find a way to live pleasurably. And now, money is an end in itself. Where's joy? Where's creativity? Where's individuality in the real sense? Shit! Nobody can ever tell me—and that's my parents' bag—that when you weigh the balance, I'm depriving my child of anything." This was the same very sensible Laura who wished for cleaner, better-organized, more sanitary commune conditions. But, according to her, it was a sufferance lightly borne in comparison to the oppressiveness and dehumanization of the dominant culture.

In the final analysis, the force of the hippie commune movement is seen in spiritual terms. Erik Erikson, one of the most influential names in psy-

chology, has demonstrated that the conditioning to distinguish good from bad as defined by the dominant group begins in infancy and remains as the hardening spine of character all through life. A new kind of infancy, a new incubation for the human personality, with its concentration upon a radically different value system, is the goal of the hippie communal movement.

"No one is using that land. Nobody gives a shit about it!" protested the leader of a tribal group in New Mexico when informed by local authorities that they were being displaced from where they had set up camp. "We're not hurting anybody. All we want to do is our own thing. Sonovabitch, man! We want to be free!" His outcry was a tortured plea against repressive forces which were incomprehensible to him. He did not understand that, as the brilliant ethnologist Konrad Lorentz has stated, "Any human group which exceeds in size that which can be held together by personal love and friendship, depends for its existence on . . . culturally ritualized behavior patterns."

Indeed, the aspired communitarian bond is personal love and friendship as a global commandment. The presence of this tribal group on this unused and worthless land might have been overlooked if they had been willing to acknowledge and emulate the rituals of the local community. For example, the productive kibbutz-style communitarians seemed to maintain good inter-community relations. But the true hip communitarian senses that to perform the ritual is to ascribe to and embrace the value system. He stubbornly resists conformity even at the expense of physical discomfort.

On the early leg of my commune odyssey, I confidentially informed one group member that I was

a poet but was presently working as a freelance journalist, and explained the nature of my assignment. His derisive retort was, "Bullshit, man! You are what you do." The communitarian message: function and form, communication and commune, are one and the same. How this may be substantiated, those of us in the surplus-production society can hardly fathom. But lest we become impatient with such abstractions, it is wise to keep in mind that the basis for all natural law upon which the objective world is constructed is that of imaginative abstraction. Psychologist R. D. Laing states, in his *Politics of Experience*, ". . . perception, imagination, fantasy, reverie, dreams, memory, are simply different modalities of experience, none more 'inner' or 'outer' than the other."

Because Dr. Margaret Mead realizes that the feelings of the new-breed sensibility work through all of these modalities, she allows it so much credence. And the most tradition-bound scientist would have to concur with Buckminster Fuller's estimate that ninety-nine percent of reality's electromagnetic spectrum is invisible. Understandably, we do not pilot here with our physical senses.

Colognes, depilatories, deodorants, table service, TV dinners, air humidifiers, power politics and packaged funerals, are not what it's all about, is the point that Laura was making. During one of our discussions, she commented with annoyance on her parents' disapproval of her having produced a child out of wedlock. "We're all married—married to each other from the day we're born!" She was expressing the new breed's awareness of the common bond of humanity and the conviction that the time for the ultimate decision has arrived. Oblivion or utopia.

The hippie communitarian movement is a declaration of the soaring faith that is to carry humankind—beyond any of the currently available alternatives—into utopian realms.

PART II

Problems & Hazards Of The New Communitarians

BACK TO NATURE

Having stated my conviction that the new communitarian represents not a retreatist phenomenon, but a genuine movement with which I am in sympathy, I now proceed to enumerate some of its most grievous faults and hazards. Unfortunately, the turnover rate of these groups is very high and as a result, there is an accumulation of experience which is given insufficient circulation within the movement.

First and foremost is the communitarian's own upbringing within the dominant culture which is denaturalized or artificial. Man and nature being two sides of the same coin, the de-naturalized new communitarian now finds himself—like a fish out of water—in a natural environment. Also, sufficient time to permit acclimatization is extremely important because of the new sense in group relationships.

During my orientation on the scene, I made a habit of drawing someone aside and asking several rather basic questions about where they crashed, ate, the location of the john, and so on. The most instructive answer (and it set me straight) came from a member bizarrely cloaked like a young Moondog. He grinned, throwing up his hands and pointing simultaneously in all directions, including the sky and ground. "It's all in there, up, down, and every place, wherever you want it."

There is a tempo, a temperament and a style discernible even among the most disordered groups. The distinction between an Establishment community and a sub-culture group can be elucidated by sociologist David Riesman's familiar terms, "inner- and other-directed." The Establishment community is other-directed, with its physical design and function paramount. The new communitarian group is inner-directed. His community *is* himself. The expressions "tune in—dig the vibes—groove on it," are more than vague allusions. It is a revolutionary way of relating, and the feedback into the Establishment is already being felt. It is not an easy adjustment for incoming communitarians to make. Many go rather quickly from one place to another in search of that outward sense of order to which they have been accustomed.

The ability to existentially drift with the situation, allowing it to define itself, demands time and, even more so, self-sufficiency and survival skills in a natural environment. The new psychic-oriented communitarian's inclination is a transcendental communion with nature. Their forebear is the spiritual Thoreau, not the survival-school Paul Bunyan. For the latter, the satisfaction is in the conquest of nature. In contrast, for the com-

munitarian, the relationship with nature is a conjoining and a coming home.

Here I am reminded of the noisy, rowdy, Monterey group. Someone had shouted, "Hey, man—look at that sun!" And within seconds, all were quietly aligned, observing the brilliant sunset, their faces lit with a childlike awe and wonder. Also, I am reminded of the unconcealed delight of the California commune member who slowly dipped into the creek, murmuring, "Beautiful—beautiful. Water is the mother, the holy mother of all."

Theirs is a spontaneous, childlike affinity with nature. In countless such instances, my thought was, these are eyes looking out of the soul, where love and beauty have not been crowded out by productive purpose. While at the beginning, my interest and admiration were for the productive settlements as the directional indicators for the movement, I now believe that their tendency is to slip back into the old utilitarian ways. Groups such as these immediately point up their organizational skills, as if these have become their goal.

Ralph recognized that order and organization, the need to become proficient in the science of coping with the natural environment but never losing the central idea that this was but a means to a far more fundamental community, was the truest ideal of common-unity. Each person was to do his own thing, as part of the group, not according to the group's needs or demands, but his own.

But for such an idea to be understood, the group has to maintain itself long enough so each new communitarian can become sufficiently equipped to keep up his "drift." To lose heart in the face of the harsh vicissitudes of the natural environment or to accept what amounts to "a numbered berth" in a

utilitarian group, is as much a cop-out as a return to the Establishment.

Much of the listlessness and poor health among young communitarians can certainly be attributed to malnourishment and inadequate shelter. There is a prevalence of colds, bronchial diseases and sinusitis. Many superficial infections and diseases would be greatly reduced with shelters conducive to proper sanitation and hygiene. Safe means of food preparation and attention to utensils are essential. And in the opinion of the free-clinic physician with whom I discussed the matter, adequate shelter could also help to reduce the high rate of venereal diseases (which he referred to as "a nomadic affliction"). (See Part III for helpful information on this subject.)

The free circulation of drugs provides a continuous source of tension on the communal scene, primarily because of the external pressures upon incubating communal groups. It is one of the most common pretexts used by local authorities to hamper the free movement of individual members or to invade the area itself. Routine mauling and manhandling by local police is so pervasive that many new communities prohibit possession and use of drugs on communal premises. Unfortunately, this creates dissension within groups that look upon such uptightness as a symptom of "playing the Establishment oppression game."

Because drug possession provides the dominant culture with its most direct legal bludgeon, there is much ambivalence on the subject among earnest commune organizers. It accounts for a large part of their exhortation to "get high on life itself" through various transcendental practices and "psy-

chological affinities with the spirits in nature." Even Timothy Leary at this time insists that LSD, for example, "is not for everyone," rather, for certain people psychologically prepared to serve as the astronauts of the consciousness.

A young, free-clinic physician subscribing to many of the radical anti-Establishment attitudes of those he treats, instructively analyzed the drug problem: "The situation is compounded of ignorance, fear and sheer hypocrisy. Any medicine cabinet at home will reveal that we are a drug-oriented culture. By this I mean the use of sedatives, tranquilizers, psychic energizers or general alerters as a chemical means for controlling and altering mental and psychological states. But the Establishment justifies such drug use—and let us not forget that alcohol is not to be excluded as a mental disinhibitor—channeled to perform legitimized behaviors.

"Well, the kids need no such subterfuge. For them, turning on has this new dimension of heightened sensory experience. It really means getting high on pleasure. I don't know about expanding the consciousness, but in order to achieve this, it does call for stretching or expanding it so that this new state can be tapped directly. The crux of the problem is the fear of our institutions of frontally attacking the issue by the thoroughgoing research essential to clinically document the effects of these drugs. They already realize that this would lead to a general release of many such substances and that suppression, medically and legally, would become indefensible. Let's face it. Basically, it's a power struggle. The elders, in control of our institutions, do not want to relinquish them to the young. With the unfortunate result that pandemonium reigns

on the drug scene, with the illegal distribution of all manner of doctored substances, some of them very damaging, and totally uninformed young people unselectively absorbing chemical substances they have not been psychologically prepared to take.

"For example, and this is an opinion based upon direct observation and treatment, I am of the opinion that as many as ninety-five percent of the bad trips reported by LSD and other hallucinogenics would not occur if the young people taking the drugs understood the process of temporary disorientation. And from where I sit, the entrenched institutions could not be more satisfied than to maintain this state of confusion, conflicting professional opinion—chromosome breakage is or is not serious, a diminution or not in the powers of mental abstraction. These are terror tactics, and they not only work on the young drug user or potential user, but they psychologically induce many of the bad effects of their erroneous claims.

"I cannot give you details, for obvious reasons, but some of my own research with those I've treated here definitely substantiates my position on the subject. Maybe one of these days I'll be able to release my studies and so will a great many others who are compelled to conduct them *sub rosa* at present."

Drugs—marijuana and other cannabis derivatives—continue to be in common use. And though the psychedelic drugs—LSD, mescaline, peyote, etc.—are used in far lesser amounts, among many inspirational transcendentalists highly influential in the movement, they are "the fruit of psychic vision."

Ambiguities resulting from misinformation and rumor get back into the sensitized communitarian environment, and sustain an air of perturbation, so that many members use drugs and yet are apprehensive about the effects. Many consider such users as undesirables because of the possible exposure of the group to external punitive action. At the same time, outright prohibition, frequently encountered in the older, more stabilized communes, is looked upon by some as an infringement of sacred personal rights. Certainly, the drug issue serves as the basis for local community irrationality and interference.

The failure on the part of commune members to anticipate and make efforts to establish a bridge of tolerance, if not sympathy, with the local Establishment community is another fundamental weakness of the movement. Often the very insistence upon the concept of a leaderless group acts against its chances for long-term survival. Many individuals capable of asserting guidance refrain from doing so, being hypersensitive to role-playing. This desire for group submergence under the separatist banner "do your own thing" is paradoxical only if viewed from the old Establishment sense of *physical* community. The new communitarian's frame of reference as an "electronic literate" is at the *psychic* level.

The nomadic communitarian introduces another hazard to the movement. It involves that of the megalomaniacal cultist leader. There are many charismatic transcendentalists within the movement who, like Joe the Mystic, do not covet personal power. Perhaps these are the true astronauts of the expanded consciousness. The excitement of

their own broadened sense of awareness is sufficient to sustain their interest, and their wish to communicate their images, visions, premonitions to others is generally salutory and conducive to increased individual and group development. Such passive leadership may be likened to that of the Hindu guru. It is simultaneously individual- and group-reinforcing.

But the cultist zealot is of a different order and the new communitarian seems especially susceptible to the compelling attractions of these clever psychopaths. Homeless, physically buffeted by a survival-level existence, and disillusioned with the vagueness of the sub-culture, they wander into the orbit of these zealots who present themselves as bearers of the truth. They are invariably glib, brilliantly intuitive street psychologists. Two of the three I met quickly recognized that I was not "disciple material" and engineered my departure on the first day. Another, from whom I managed to get a lengthy biography—with what I assumed was a surreptitious taping—had been using *me*, as it turned out, secretly telling the others that I was a well-known movie writer traveling incognito and was going to make a movie about them which would bring national prominence to the group. About Cultist A, as I shall call the first one, my impressions were that he, like the others, was very resourceful and assumed personal responsibility for the well-being of the group. I particularly regretted having been so promptly put off by this New Mexico tribal cultist because he was the most acute and, in spite of his ego-trip, did operate the most presentable, even affluent encampment.

Cultist C, of whom I did the full biography, was short and robust, and wore a Western outfit. All

three, leaders, A to the point of exaggerated theatricality, seemed to be "on" all of the time. Only C, energetically bustling about, was into everything. Both A and B were rather inaccessible and exerted their influence somewhat behind-the-scene. Delivering loud instructions in a rather high-pitched voice, C cut a rather comic figure, but, on the contrary, he was attended to by the others with the utmost seriousness.

At the time of my arrival in the temporary quarters of C's tribal group, he had a plan for equipping them all with motorcycles, four of which he had already managed to acquire. Apparently, no one was interested in *how* he had gotten them, and to my direct question, he merely shrugged noncommittally. Of the three groups his was the smallest, with eleven members or "disciples." (My estimate of the other groups is of double this number. B's group might have been still larger since some of his followers were out on a scavenging mission. Food, furniture, anything which they could find—perhaps even steal.) In each group the tribe shared quarters while the leader maintained an individual shelter. A's was a separate, newly constructed adobe. B had a separate room in a large eleven-room dwelling refurnished by the group. C lived in a Volks camper while the others crashed in an unsightly abandoned shack.

When I declared to A's group that I was a poet, a young woman, quite attractive but too thin and with neglected teeth, stated that A was also a poet. Her balding, bare-chested male companion corrected her, stating that A was "a philosopher, turned on to metaphysics." She handed me a sheet of carefully lettered lines, two of which follow:

I tell you seven times seven, that your body is a dream I dreamed.

and

Only I can point the way to where each man is an island.

B had his entire group into Hindu philosophy on which he lectured or, according to those in the group, "conducted two correspondences each day, one at sunrise and the other at sunset." Unfortunately, my arrival and departure times did not permit me to attend them. But I learned that his was a fairly academic interpretation of the Hindu *maya*, representing the Higher Self, with the world as illusion, with all things no more than clever roles enacted by the self. So the message was: we are all one, and playwrights of reality according to our own scripts.

Whether these young cultists were convinced of their own delusions I do not know. But there were clear symptoms of serious ego distortion and the messianic compulsion to dominate. Certainly my encounter with three similar personalities active in tribal groups on the hip communitarian scene cannot be ascribed to coincidence. I believe that the commune phenomenon has made available to such persons an incredibly receptive audience and that they, naturally, gravitate toward such groups. Furthermore, the new communitarian's sensibility—mystically inclined and struggling to alter the traditional reality pattern is singularly vulnerable to such influences.

In order to allow the reader a personal glimpse into the nature of the problems within the movement, I have selected here a tape recorded presentation of several verbatim accounts. These are, ad-

mittedly, "problem" cases and they have been chosen to help elucidate the movement's more common hazards and pitfalls. Many experiences may seem to be unduly harsh and bitter, but the attitudes and states of mind of these individuals are not atypical.

Complete Case History I

Wallace C. is nineteen years old, with dark shaggy hair, nervous quick brown eyes behind steel-rimmed John Lennon glasses, patchily bearded (perhaps to disguise his acne), and a quick-staccato way of expressing himself. He has a habit of breaking off his speech, sometimes mid-sentence, with a chuckle, apparently as a cover for his embarrassment at any of his own revelations which might suggest personal weakness. He is very aware of his youthful age, but with two years of commune experience, considers himself a veteran of the scene.

"I'm not a schmuck, I'll tell you that. My father hates my guts, thinks I'm some kind of horse's ass. He's French, works as a *maitre d'* and makes out pretty good financially. But the hours are lousy—late nights and working weekends. It's not much good between him and my mother. Time on her

hands, college night courses, shit like that. My father came over in the thirties, shoveled all kinds of shit during the Depression, and so he figures that it isn't a bad life. And I'm a horse's ass. I was going to Jamaica High School, that's in Queens, in New York, and I got into this highschool free press thing. Student union, screw the principal, liberate the students, that kind of bag. Before that, I was making out great with my grades and that kind of phlegm. I had these arguments at home. No allowance, stay in after school. Pathetic. Then I started getting into the East Village scene. Crashing in any pad I could find, panhandling on the street, and then pushing some grass. Just some joints to the brothers.

"I had some bad fights at home, but when my father saw that he couldn't handle it, he just threw up his hands. Like he didn't give a damn. He's a nervous type. Ulcers. And he told me that I'd have to find out the hard way. I just didn't show up for school after that. And there was this deep-freeze atmosphere at home. But at least nobody was on my back. Anyway, I got onto the sex thing. I was a virgin up to then, no kidding. Then I got a dose and I was feeling dirty and guilty and that kind of shit. Like it was a punishment, or something. I was ashamed about going back home and maybe getting my folks sick. So there was this groovy spade, Ray, and he had this white chick, Marilyn, who was from the West Coast. And he had this real cool Impala convertible and he was going to drive her to Frisco. He'd never been to the Coast and like it was going to be a groovy scene, and when I asked him if I could ride along, he said sure. Then he wanted to go by way of the South and Marilyn told him this was crazy, but I think it was an ego

thing. He had this gorgeous white chick and groovy wheels and, like, he wanted to flaunt it.

"It was just outside Washington, I think Maryland, that we stopped for a hamburger at this diner and we almost got the shit kicked out of us. Four apes jumped us when we left and started ripping the clothes off Marilyn and beating up on me and Ray, but this state trooper broke it off and told us to get the hell out of town. But Ray was a stubborn sonovabitch and someone put us onto this commune. About eighteen people and they have this place, a homesteading kind of thing. They run it like some kind of school, trying to make it on the land. Marilyn flipped for it and she had this argument with Ray and he split, leaving us both.

"I met this acid-head, Zeb, he had this Volks that he called Sister, with all these cock and cunt pictures painted all over it like flowers. We hit it off right away but Marilyn couldn't stomach him and visa versa. I could never make it with her anyhow so I went with Zeb. He knew all about the commune scene. He had spent a lot of time at Morningstar. That it was an outasight place. And then we got onto this place in Miami, some new-age commune, I think they called it, and it was something like this other setup, their whole idea to fill you in on the scene if you want to get a place of your own started. But they sure didn't take to us. And they were all uptight about us turning on, and Zeb's car. Zeb had this argument with some idiot there, saying they had this institutional hangup. They seemed like good brothers to me, but how does any guy figure he's free when there's this kind of file system to drop back into?

"Anyway, we kept on going and Zeb said he'd heard of this groovy new group in Sarasota. We

started going that way and then Zeb had a bummer. He really freaked out. I don't know if it was bad acid or what, but he started crying about this kid he'd left behind. I didn't know how to drive then but I got the car over to the side of the road and we were in a field for practically a whole night. My stomach was empty and I was really in bad shape, and when I fell asleep, I felt this pain, like somebody had stuck a knife into me. This sonovabitch Zeb, he got my pants down and reamed me. I got him off me but I was bleeding and I started puking. He finally conked out but I was afraid to go back to sleep. I tried to get a hitch but it really hurt me to stand up and move around, and then when it got light and he came out of it, we started going again. He acted like he didn't know what he'd done, but when I asked him who the kid was he'd cried about, you know what he said? 'The kid was me,' meaning himself.

"I tell you, he was out of it but I went with him to this Sarasota commune. By then, any place I could crash and maybe get some food was all I wanted. They weren't a bad group. They had these two old houses, right next to each other. They weren't in too bad a condition but it was dirty as hell inside. I mean it really stank. And there were these mattresses on the floor that you couldn't lay down on them without the bedbugs biting the hell out of you. The place—Free Souls—was started by some students who had come down to Ft. Lauderdale, I think for a school vacation, and they just stayed on, with others getting into the scene. There were seventeen of them when Zeb and I got there. The food didn't taste bad. It was mostly stuff made with bread. This brother—Murray, I think his name was—a real funny cat and an op-

erator. You know what I mean. He'd go to the stores and get these old breads and then he'd soak them down and cook all kinds of things with them. Baked dishes, fried stuff, mixing whatever else he had around in with it.

"But I got this stomach virus and diarrhea. It was my first time with the C.C.'s (commune cramps). I tell you, I lay there like I was gonna die, but nobody paid much attention. I didn't know then that it was the kind of thing that got to everybody and you had to learn to live with it. Except for mad dashes to the crapper, I must have lain there for three days, feeling like a truck ran over me. It's funny now but I remember that I got this odd feeling, thinking that I was going to die. It was in the middle of the night and I got up and I thought I had to get out of this place, go *somewhere*.

"I went out into the street and it was black and quiet. No cars. Nothing. I started walking and there was a slight drizzle coming down. Then this thought hit me and I stopped. I could wire home, collect, but what would I do then, go back? I used to have these arguments with my father. One time, I thought I was going to study medicine and I would tell him that I could make it, easy. These days, doctors can make a lot of bread. But I used to tell him that I didn't want to get into all of the Establishment hangups. But this was the first time, standing there, still woozy as hell and getting soaked, I realized that I *couldn't* make it. Whatever it took to show up for classes everyday, hit the books, all of that—I didn't have it. That there was nothing out there for me. I was scared but I think it could have been a lot worse because I had this feeling—these people I had been living with for

practically a week, they had to be feeling the same way. So I went back inside and I went to sleep.

"After that, I really started to get interested in the commune scene. But it was a real heavy thing. People around the neighborhood really hated our guts. We were like some kind of freak show. And someone was always on our backs. Some fire inspector. Sanitation inspector. The fuzz snooping around, just aching to tag us on a drug charge. Stan, really No. 1 with the group, he was onto this loving brother thing. He talked about it a lot, saying that if we were outwardly loving, that the vibes we were projecting would sort of—neutralize theirs. He really believed it and at first I thought he was some kind of a nut, but then I wasn't sure. I really tried to feel that way but I couldn't make it with the rest of them. I thought at first that maybe it was because I'd come in with Zeb, and they dumped him because he had another bad trip. And when they tried to bring him out of it by soaking him in the bathrub, he ran out of the place, wet and naked and running down the street hollering like a madman in broad daylight. Nobody was against his doing his own thing but Stan said it would be at the expense of the rest of us. And then I thought they felt uncomfortable because I was a lot younger than everyone else around. I wasn't even seventeen then.

"Anyway, my stomach couldn't take the food after a while. I would feel nauseous just looking at all that gloppy bread. I know I lost a lot of weight, about twelve pounds, and I was sleeping an awful lot. The next time I got sick, I went over to the clinic at the hospital and they told me I had intestinal virus and they gave me these pills. I made up my mind that as soon as I felt better, I was going

to head back to the East Village. From there I would try to get a ride to the Coast and maybe go to Morningstar, that commune that Zeb said was so great."

Wallace made his way back to New York City, hitch-hiking, with a severe case of athlete's foot and hemorrhoids (both, ailments endemic among the new communitarians). His scrofulous state provoked a violent attack from his father who, unable to comprehend so self-willed a deterioration, struck him. Wallace returned to the East Village "in bad shape." There he made several acquaintances, and through one, found his way into an upstate New York commune.

"This fellow Arthur, he had a brother who had a little leathercraft shop in the East Village and it went bust. He had a wife and a kid, four years old, and they knew some friends who were with this commune and they went to live there and Arthur would go up there some weekends. It was when I was talking about this Sarasota group that I was with that he mentioned this place. On the next weekend that he went up, he took me with him. And I'll tell you, I'm not saying this to be dramatic or anything. These people saved my life. I looked and I felt like absolute hell when I got there. And Arthur's brother's wife, Carol, what a really beautiful person! She really got to me. Like I began talking and I told her everything, my situation at home and what I went through. I'd never opened up with anyone like that before but it was like—like she really wanted to know. And she got Todd to get the others to agree to let me stay.

"There were seven couples and three of them had kids. All together, there were seven kids on the place. Really a nice place. About thirty acres and

these two barns they had converted into living quarters. Todd had rebuilt this chicken house, whatever you call it, into three rooms. A bedroom, kitchen, and studio room, where I slept. Todd, he's really great with his hands. I tell you, that's really important, that I've learned, if anybody wants to stay with this commune thing. But it takes a lot of time and a lot of doing. And it's got to be your kind of bag.

"Most of the people, like the younger ones—these couples, Carol and Todd's group, they were anywhere from like twenty-seven to forty years old. Married and all that. You know, into this home-making thing. They can make this commune thing really work for them. But it's not *our* thing, if you know what I mean. Like if you're in your early twenties and you haven't been through the eudcation and job mill, and, like getting married and having kids, it isn't where we're at.

"But I'm sure not knocking it. It was a beautiful place, those woods, and they have this lake on their land. After three, four months there, like it was the first time in my life I felt really healthy. Even my skin, which has always been bad, it really cleared up. Carol, she actually was a schoolteacher and she used to teach the kids and plan their activities. That was her thing. Everybody had something, and Chester, this guy who used to be an accountant with General Electric, he set up this 'good works program' he called it, with most people taking turns doing what had to be done. There was a lot of work keeping that place in that condition but they were a nice bunch of people. Sort of onto their own religious thing. Carol was big on it and she'd talk about it a lot—like carrying your own church around inside you and treating all life like

didn't mind this thing going on because like it—it gave them some kind of cause.

"I didn't belong there in the first place. Like they were nice enough to let me stick around to get myself in shape and I had no business opening my mouth. It was time for me to split, and I knew it. On the afternoon I was going to go, Carol took me into the woods and we talked awhile and she held me and let me feel her around. It wasn't a dirty-dickie kind of thing with her. You know, one of the times I was stripped down and bathing, she soaked me down with this special soap that helped me clear up my skin. And then when she started to touch my cock, I didn't want her to because I thought I had the clap and I didn't want to get her sick or anything. You know what she did? She said this thing about being pure inside in the way you felt about making love, and she—she went down on me. Nothing ever happened to her. Maybe I was cured by then."

Wallace had two more unfulfilling commune experiences. In those newer, loose-knit groups for which he had a special affinity, the physical conditions soon became intolerable. With a plaguing recurrence of his intestinal ailment, he lost fifteen to twenty pounds, and, trying to stay through the winter with a summer group in Maine, he almost froze to death because of inadequate housing and he and six others required hospitalization for frostbite. Several months later, he found himself in Provincetown, Rhode Island.

"I got in with this couple, Martha and Eric, but they had their own thing to do. I was hanging around town, sleeping on the bench, breaking into some summer cottage and, man, I was really spaced out. One time, I was like dead on the sand

for maybe forty hours, nearly two whole days. I remember seeing the tide creeping up on me and thinking, 'Let it roll over me, roll right over and let me sleep.' But I snapped out of it and I lived on clams that I dug with my bare hands. And then at this coffee house in town, somebody put me onto Miles and his apostles.

"Now, that cat, he really got me, wow! Nobody could say that much by just looking at you. You couldn't believe, you really couldn't. He had this face, almost like a mask. He's tall and really light-skinned. You know what the rock singer, Johnny Winters, looks like? He's an albino. You can tell because there's something wrong with his eyes, but Miles' eyes, they had a kind of light in them. When I first came up to him and he looked at me, well, you know, I—I thought I'd flip my bird. Then he said something like, 'There are those who follow me but all men walk after each other in the same circle.'

"He was always saying thing like that. Nothing memorized. These things would just come to his head. And I really dug it. Everybody, there were nine or ten others with him at that time. After a while, it was more like double that. And we all dug him in the same way. He had this thing going about the sea and all life coming out of it. That the waves and currents were a direct source of life energy that could get through to you and nourish you, kind of continually revitalize you if you could adjust to its rhythms. His theory was that once we all could, but had forgotten how when we emerged from the sea. But this was the Age of Aquarius, you know, the astrology sign of the man with the water bucket, which he said meant that each of our bodies was a vessel of life because we had the sea

inside us. That's why our blood has salt in it, all kinds of things like that. He had it really worked out. And that this being the Aquarian age, man would return to the sea for this life-giving source.

"We lived in tents on the beach and we had these sea-rhythm seances. We'd drop down on the sand and go real limp, clear our minds of any thoughts. Become sort of like a shell with the sounds and the wave rhythms running right through us. Sounds jerked-up, doesn't it? But we could really get high on it, we really could. The idea was that you could bring yourself to higher levels of attunement. Like the outer body, and this could keep you young and healthy. And you get into, like, the molecule level and then you were like in harmony with all living things on earth. Then, finally, there was this ultimate, the atom level, and anybody who could get into that, it was like tapping the source of all energy. And if you wanted, you could live forever. And, like, Miles was getting close to that level himself.

"He was something fantastic. He had this thing all worked out, with seventeen phases that took you about five or six hours to work up to and then 'culminate in the oceanic orgasm.' It wasn't a body sexual thing. I mean, it wasn't supposed to be limited to that but a whole spiritual-sexual thing. That was like the only time I felt I really was grooving on something. Like I was so far into it that I didn't think about anything else. Nothing else bothered me. We'd be into this thing for hours every day and I felt really fantastic.

"It may sound kooky now but it sure wasn't that way to me at that time. Nor any of the others. Some of them were—like, really intellectual. And this Claude, I think his name was, his father owns a lot of property in Provincetown, was talking

about getting acrostatic institutes set up. Acrostatic is the energy source—places like Esalen on the West Coast. We got so deep into this thing that everything else was unreal. But whatever it was, it was all in Miles. He was picked up on a molest charge for playing around with some kid. He was a fag, hung-up about little boys. All of us knew it, but what the hell. Anyway, it wasn't the first time, and he couldn't get off, and so they put him away and the whole thing burst like a bubble."

Wallace continued to shake his head incredulously at the immense influence which Miles had exercised over his group. By the time I met Wallace, he was a confirmed nomadic communitarian still seeking a scene that would work for him. And he would, indeed, be an easy mark for another like Miles.

Complete Case History II

"Flagellating myself on the commune scene."

Then I met chunky, dark-eyed, vivacious Annette, age twenty-six, in dye-streaked jeans, her bare, full bosom continuously agitated by her animated gestures. She was wise, boldly feminine, with an extraordinary synthesis of a forty-five-year-old maturity and a pure adolescent zest. She quickly read my intentions, and curling up her lips and with smiling inquiry in her eyes, asked, "Which publication are you on the scene for?"

"Journalism is a male occupation, after all. Word-work like an alphabetic erector set, hah! Erection set would be more like it. What an image. But that's where the female head is at, quick-flash intuitive images. It all comes through—zap! Why go through the tedium of assembling all of the packaged volumes? I had a thousand great ideas

for fabulous books, but once I have the idea, that's it—it's there, if you know what I mean.

"My freaked-up papa used to froth at the mouth because I used to take the flicks so seriously, really living through some of the movies and crying for days over unhappy endings. I was a walking cinema circus, an actress, really into every picture I saw, and he was always trying to bring me down to 'the *real* world' and equipping myself for the practicalities to make out in it. School was bullshit except for the boy-girl social rub, but I was a quick study and my father thought I ought to be a lawyer, no less. Because I was a great social organizer, or at least a *Time-Life* journalist because I was editor of the school paper. My movie bug used to aggravate the pants off him. He was always screaming that they were going to 'poison my brain.' And you know, Papa was right.

"For me, it's all quick-flick. And instead of collecting a lot of Joannes and Harry B.'s—My Personal Experience on a Commune, like all of the nitpicking tripe on the subject that's being published these days—that's what you ought to get into. That's what the commune relationship is all about. At least, what it's *supposed* to be all about. It's a new relationship based on a female intuitional thing. The hammer-and-nails master-builder—or masturbator, hah!—is a male tool kit. That's why the long hair, snake hips and boy-buggering fruity hippie. It is a feminization to turn your guts onto intuitional vibes. I could walk into Mandy's (*a back-number newsprint store featuring underground publications*) and point out a twelve-pix scenario—an image of the whole fucked-up male globe, in five minutes, that no twenty volumes of pigeon-shit sociology could match.

"Now don't read me wrong. I am not a dyke and I don't subscribe to the new dykey women's-lib turn-on. It took me practically three years, the roughest of my life, to find out where my head was at and why I had been flagellating myself on the commune scene and going through the ordeal of barely keeping alive. I am not the outdoorsy, Marlboro-country-girl type. I'm not against tile bathrooms, flush toilets and Scott tissue, for crissakes! To me, body lice and roaches are no badge for Mother Courage. I hate these shitty conditions and they almost did me in when I was with that Big Sur hill tribe. Whether it was hepatitis—that bug's all over the place!—typhoid, or in the hell knows what, I was burning with fever and convulsions, lying on the floor of a shack covered with old tarp, for nearly four days. And I might as well have been some stray dog, for all of the help I got. Not because they're the kind of people who don't give a damn. Commune people are essentially good people. Many of them are really beautiful. But they're so locked in just trying to stay alive.

"I would never have survived this long. The diet alone would have killed me if, in pure self-defense, I didn't learn something about natural foods. How to dry out and save fruits and vegetables and even—let me tell you that, for me, that's going the whole way!—learning how to butcher, dress and cook pigeon, rabbit, whatever anybody could lay their hands on. I hate cooking. There was a time when I lived at home that I couldn't even stomach burger meat or roast beef that was too bloody rare. But I've learned. Man, have I learned! There's a lot more to eating than just filling your stomach. If occasionally you don't get a meal that looks and tastes good—that's fully satisfying to the senses—

you lose the capacity for joy. You think I'm exaggerating. But why in the hell do you think so many of these cats look like day-old corpses that can hardly drag their asses around? And with all of the media bullshit about free-loving orgies, it is not too often that I get myself properly laid with an honest-to-god, oldfashioned, really hard hardon.

"But I'm not knocking the scene. I'm not knocking it. I wouldn't *be* here if I felt that there wasn't a lot more to it, outweighing the importance of a clean indoor toilet and a James Beard Pigfest. When I was at Berkeley, I lived in the town after I left the school. I wanted to get into cinema courses but they were so shittily intellectualized that I dropped the idea. But what I was saying . . . I met this character, a real Sierra Club fanatic. You know, build your own cabin and commune with chipmunks. But Jayce was a good-looking guy, a Burt Lancaster with brains, yet—a philosophy major. For him, at least for a while, I was willing to suffer through the camping-out routine. I hated it—but then he introduced me to some commune people and I became interested. It was like the furthest extreme from anything that normally grabbed me, but it was intuitional.

"There was something in the movement that made more sense to me than anything else I had going. I didn't know what I wanted to do. Everything read to me like past history and I had this partly dead feeling, like living inside of a museum. Work—profession—for what? Marriage and kids? Everything was falling apart, wherever you looked. Like, nothing was *growing*, if you read me. These people, there were twenty-six of them, and they have this homesteading project going. Four of them started with six acres, nothing but ground,

woods, and a running brook. By the time I went up to the place, they had about seventeen acres, and it was really well-developed. They had several types like Jayce, and they could do about anything, saw trees, build a house with plumbing, even electrical work. The place looked like a movie set for a frontier settlement. I lived there for almost seven months. They had all these terrific ideas, a new kind of community relationship, the whole bag. But except for maybe giving themselves the illusion that they were living on a new freaked-out circuit by smoking pot and playing musical beds, their lives weren't any different, except physically harder, than neighborhood couples in Boise, Idaho or any place. TV was out for them, but they had these group-sings and they were very big on artsy-craftsy stuff. Everybody was always making something, hooked rugs, patchquilts, wood furniture . . .

"I couldn't sew a straight seam or core a tomato, and I didn't see how running my head through that scene was going to expand my consciousness. Hah! There was this hip character who was no more orgasmic about playing Dan Boone than I was making like Betsy Ross. We both split and we ended up in Big Sur, and I gave you some idea of what happened there. Then I went with a Kerista group in Monterey, picked up a jolly dose and finally got rid of it, thanks to the free clinic in Frisco, after having an awful time. And then after four months at Morningstar, I was jumped by four spades and that shook me up so badly that I wasn't exactly right in the head for almost a year.

"I needed a head shrink to straighten me out. This bare-tit, liberated-woman image was not a battle easily won, hah! And then, let's see . . . I was with the Monsters, an ecology group started in

Oregon. A groovy lot of people who came closest to making this commune idea work, at least my version of it. They didn't live off a garbage dump but they weren't about to go kibbutz. They were onto a lot of creative things but the local *gendarmes* were down on them and eventually the group fell apart. The pressure on them was too much.

"I don't know. Maybe this thing won't take. Maybe it's premature and too weak an idea to come together. I'd like to see it last long enough to find out. If it doesn't, I don't know. I just don't know . . . There sure as hell isn't anything out there for me any more . . ."

Complete Case History III

"What it is, the Opposing Force."

I have already described the general person and physiognomy of Cultist C, or Naturo, as his followers addressed him. When I asked him whether this pseudonym had any significance, he told me, "The opposing forces gave it to me. They dared me to use it, so . . ." He smiled broadly, as if it were all a put-on, which I quite frankly thought it was, along with many of his answers to my questions. But when I finally got him going on his own monologue, into his background, I discovered that he was quite serious. His disarming smile seemed a calculated device to keep those about him off-balance. The following tape was interrupted several times because of his hyper-attention to all that was happening around him.

"You know, you *can* lead a horse to water and

make him drink. All you have to do is keep him at it long enough. That's the way you get the better of the opposing forces. That's why we can never win in Viet Nam. The Oriental was raised to understand. It isn't anything as simple and stupid as patience. Any stubborn jackass can develop that. You want to know what it is—look into a chink's eyes sometime. It's a whole philosophy, that's what it is. He was born to it. It's in his brain cells. He's not afraid to die. But, no, it isn't this idea about going to Heaven after he dies and joining his ancestors. Nothing like that. The Oriental knows very well that dying means—dead. Decay. Dust to dust. What he knows is that he holds his life in his own hands. (*He reached for a hunting knife and, with a smile, brought the blade close to his throat.*) See this? One slice and that's it, right? And who's God of myself? I am. I can end it, and this is what people do *not* understand. I—you for yourself—can keep it going.

What you have to do is take a stand against the opposing force. Show the opposing force that you'll challenge *anything!* That shows him how powerful the volume of life inside you is. The only signal he has to go by is when you run or back off. When you won't last him out. Then he knows the life inside you has run out and it's weak. Then, then that's it. Forget it.

"Hell! The opposing force is—it's everything that isn't. (*He made a wide gesture with a sweep of his arm.*) All this *is*, correct? It would stay like this, exactly like it is, all of the time. Except for—the opposing force. We call it 'changing,' but it's the opposing force chopping it off like lost minutes. You've heard of the anti-universe. That's what it's like, the black forces. Some people who believe in

the occult witchcraft—ever hear of the Black Mass?—a bunch of idiots! What it is, is the opposing force. I always knew it. I knew it when I was a kid.

"I have this bastard of an uncle. My old lady, she was a real pig. She used to work the crib in the Frenchie Quarter, New Orleans. Bet you don't believe me. Lots of times when I was a kid, I used to sleep in the same room with these guys coming in to pop her pussy. What a pig! So there I was with this uncle of mine—I never saw my old man. This was a big bastard, believe me. He used to work docks, and he had an arm—like that! Know what he used to do at the pubs for free drinks? He'd let guys bust him in the gut, as hard as they could hit him, and he bet them that it couldn't make him flinch. I seen it, more times than I could count. Let me tell you, nobody had guts enough to stand up to him. But he could never get me to do anything I didn't want to do. Not me. Why? Because I knew that he was a tool of the opposing forces testing me. Man, he would sometimes slug me silly. But it didn't do him no good. And as soon as the opposing force saw that, *he* backed off.

"Then when I was eleven, I was in this home—that's a helluva word for that place. One of those charitable institutions. Nuns and everything. It was like living in a graveyard and drilling with the Army. They had a billion things for you to do every time you turned around. And you couldn't talk. You couldn't do this—do that. Or you got a crack on your hands with those wood rulers. They'd wallop you until your hands looked like hamburger meat. The kids, geez, they were scared shitless. Not me. I never did nothing I didn't want to do. They busted more rulers on me. One of them

Sisters, one time she had one of these steel rulers, about like fourteen inches. She'd hit me and then she'd ask me if I was going to, you know, straighten out. I didn't say a thing. Not a thing. She practically freaked out, cut me up with that ruler. But I didn't care about her. I knew it wasn't her. It was the opposing force.

"After that, they let me alone. I could get almost anything I wanted if I just kept at it. And the kids—I'd have them hopping all over the place for me. You know why? Because the opposing force knew that I had more powerful life in me than any of the others. The nuns, anybody. Like, take this place here. Some of these people are no fools. You know the big ape, the one with the leather vest, Monte? Maybe he don't look it but he's a graduate of San Francisco State. And that little dark brunette piece of ass, Sheila. Looks like a teenage kid, don't she? She's twenty-nine. She was a biochemist, working with—think it was General Dynamics. Ask her yourself. Some of the others, they've been around too. But who runs the show around here?

"I never said to any of them that I'm gonna be the leader or any shit like that. I never asked any of them to hang around me and get behind my thing. And you want to know something? I was never into the hip scene. I never dropped acid. I don't smoke pot. Bet you think I'm putting you on. I don't need that kind of stuff. I don't need anything. I'll tell you something. You could take all my clothes and leave me without a dime. You could leave me out there in the middle of the Mojave Desert, not for forty days but for sixty—a hundred! And I'd come out the way I am, or even better, because the opposing force couldn't touch me.

"When I first hit the scene in Frisco, living on the Haight, first thing you know, they'd be around me like flies. And some groovy chicks, even better than these. I could get more jump than anybody without even trying. I had a pretty good thing going on the Haight. I walked into this dilapidated shithouse of a place. People flopping all over each other like turds. Let me tell you, in less than three weeks, I had a real little operation going, and a tribe twice, no, *three* times this size! And I had them painting, whitewashing this place. We'd collected chairs from all over the place, and a bunch from the Salvation Army, and I started the Life Force Institute. We used to have these talks—I called them Life Force Sessions. It was a buck a throw. And I gave it to them straight, explaining everything as the opposing force, and how they could strengthen this life force inside them and stand up to anything. Get anything they wanted. Then that scene busted up . . ."

There was no point in questioning Naturo when he was onto a subject he did not wish to discuss. He simply ignored it and this was his reaction to my wanting to know why the apparently successful Life Force Institute was given up. Later, from Sheila, I found out that on the basis of his Life Force theory, Naturo had persuaded some of the females who attended his talk to engage in sexual intercourse without protective contraception of any kind for they would not conceive. What was even more astonishing was that Sheila, formerly a biochemist, defended this point of view. She mentioned some studies which have disclosed the presence in the body of a self-aborting chemical. She herself believed that Naturo's Life Force

theory could work with the proper self-development of these inner resources.

I have no doubt that Naturo is a mentally sick person in need of immediate psychiatric treatment. And yet, those very symptoms of his illness—megalomania, a messianic complex with delusions couched in pseudo-scientific terms—are responsible for his influence among a certain segment of hip communitarians. My own feeling is that much of it is due to a vacuum created by extended periods of poor nutrition, mental and physical fatigue, perhaps drug usage, and a desperation to belong to an exclusive group. Whatever the reasons, the charisma of Naturo and others like him remains the most troubling of my experiences in the hip commune movement.

PART III

A Guidebook For The New Communitarians

A Brief Commune History

The aspiration to live within an ideal social environment can be traced to the Golden Age in Greece and Plato's *Republic*, which envisioned a communal ownership of property. The Essenes (a Hebrew sect) and the early Christians formed groups with a communion of interests and ideals. History abounds with movements of the utopian quest, but there is a noticeable dearth in the actualization of such groups, for attempts to form "free soul" communities were harshly and punitively repressed.

Sir Thomas More, the originator of the word "utopia" in his famous work of that title, defined the dream of a community annealed by human brotherhood as a defense against material greed. There were other such writings in the 16th and 17th Centuries, as well as rare instances of groups succeeding in putting their ideals into practice, such as the Diggers (a name familiar to hip com-

munitarians) who founded a commune on expropriated land but were violently attacked and dispersed. Their spirit never died, however, and continued to be enunciated by other famous men such as Jean Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant.

It was not until the 19th Century, with the deplorable conditions of the Industrial Revolution in England, that several settlements were founded on communitarian ideals. but even these came to fruition only because of the fortuitous circumstance of a still developing land area in the United States. Here, the followers of Robert Owen founded Nashoba and New Harmony and the famous Brooks Farm, organized on the related principles of Charles Fourier. There were others, but so compelling was the grip of the dominant culture that the movement was altogether insignificant.

Sociologists who attempt to place the hippie commune movement within the context of the aforegoing are mistaken. The hippie development is of a totally new order, wherein the past, in a sense, is irrelevant. J. H. Plumb, one of England's most distinguished historians, confirms this radical outlook in his *The Death of the Past.* However, those examining the hip commune movement within the established traditions of scholarship, interpret it as an attempt to modify what exists now or went before it.

The character of the hippie commune movement, distinct from all those which preceded it, declares its own intention: We will not put our trust in—God, labor, machine, or dollar success. These are imprisoning illusions. Happiness is the end and the means—and we want it now, and uncompromisingly.

The spirit of hedonism actively went "on the

road" with Jack Kerouac and the beat life-style, with Allen Ginsberg "howling" across a decade into the sensibilities of the incubating hippies, and with the new apostle, Timothy Leary, proffering psychedelic sacraments for titillating glimpses into a whole new world. The explosive fallout was: the dropout, grope language, freaky costume, electric circus, acid rock, and hash high, underground porn-print papers, and the new meccas—New York's East Village and San Francisco's Haight-Asbury.

In both these hippie centers there were new values—free love, shared world, free sex, free clothes and food. They moved out to the countryside, from the East Village up to Woodstock and fanning out northeast; from the Haight over to Big Sur, sweeping out north and south, to New Mexico and Oregon . . .

SHELTER

There are a number of shelters available to the communitarian for virtually every need. (Other publications useful in this connection are also included.)

Adobe Construction Methods, L. W. Neubauer. 1964; 35 pp. Available from Agricultural Publications, University Hall, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. 25¢.

The Indian Teepee, Reginald and Gladys Laubin. 1957; 208 pp. Available from University of Oklahoma Press, Sales Office, Faculty Exchange, Norman, Oklahoma 70369.

The Wilderness Cabin, Calvin Rutstrum. 1961; 169 pp. Available from The Macmillan Co., Front and Brown Streets, Riverside, New Jersey 08075. $5.95.

Earth Homes. Available from Department of Housing and Urban Development, Division of International Affairs, Washington D. C. 20410. Free.

Improvised Car Top Domes: Instructions in Dome Cookbook, Steve Baer. 1968; 40 pp. Available from Lama Cookbook Fund, P. O. Box 422, Corrales, New Mexico 87048. $1.

Low-Cost Wood Homes for Rural America—Construction Manual, L. O. Anderson. 1969; 112 pp. Available from Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 20402 $1.

Geodesics, Edward Popka. 1968; 124 pp. Available from University of Detroit Press, 4001 West McNichols Road, Detroit, Michigan 48221. $4.

Design and Control of Concrete Mixtures; Concrete Improvements for Farm and Ranch. Available from Portland Cement Association, Old Orchard Road, Skokie, Illinois 60076. Free.

A Plywood Source for Domes. Available from U.S. Plywood Corporation, 777 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017. Free.

Source for Dome Seam Tapes. Available from Miracle Adhesive Corporation, 250 Pettit Avenue, Bellmore, Long Island, New York 11710. Also, 27279 Industrial Boulevard, Hayward, California 94545.

Source for Stack Sack Shelter Construction. Available from Dicker Stack Sack International, 2600 Fairmont Street, Dallas, Texas 75201.

House Carpentry Simplified, Nelson L. Burbank. 1958; 252 pp. Available from Simmons-Boardman Books, 30 Church Street, New York, New York 10007. $8.95.

The Practical Handbook of Plumbing and Heating, Richard Day. 1969; 130 pp. Available from Arco Publishing Co., Inc., 291 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10003. $4.95.

Wiring Simplified, H. P. Richter. 29th edition,

1968; 144 pp. Available from Park Publishing, Inc., P. O. Box 5527, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408. $1.

The Whole Earth Catalogue is for the new communitarians what the Sears Roebuck Catalogue is for rural America. Available from Whole Earth Catalogue, Portola Institute, 558 Santa Cruz, Menlo Park, California 94025. Single issue, $4. Annual subscription, $8, including two catalogues and four supplements.

FOOD

The instabilities of a new commune, with harsh and unexpected stresses, compel an attentive interest in the principles of sound nutrition. Below are some publications and suggestions which should be helpful.

Bread as "the staff of life" has more than metaphoric significance. The communitarian who masters the simple secret of the preparation of sourdough—a word from the Alaska Gold Rush days, which often spelled survival—will not suffer for want of tasty and nourishing breads, rolls, hot cakes, and so on.

Sourdough

Sourdough is a leavening agent, used in place of yeast in making pastries, breads, biscuits, etc. Here is a recipe for a "starter" batch:

Mix together in large bowl equal parts of flour and water; about 6 cups of each will do for a starter. Add 3 heaping teaspoons of sugar. Cover bowl lightly with cloth and leave in open, sunny spot for five to six days, stirring occasionally. When bubbles begin rising to surface of mixture, fermentation has been achieved and your sourdough is ready for use.

Storing and Renewing Sourdough: Because it is simply a fermented mixture of flour and water (and the fermentation process is *continuous*), the dough tends to become too sour for use after about two weeks, unless it is: (1) renewed (added to) within fifteen days, or (2) stored at a temperature well below freezing.

The best method depends upon how often the sourdough is used, and the amount and type of baking done. For example, three cups of sourdough will make one batch of hotcakes or three loaves of bread; the same amount will make *six* double-layer cakes. The recipes in this section call for three cups of sourdough, or *one-half* of the starter batch. A good rule to follow: always "renew" or replace immediately the amount used by simply adding to starter a mixture of one-half water, one-half flour, and proportionate amount of sugar.

*If you bake several times a week, or only once but in quantity, begin with double or triple the above starter recipe, and replace immediately the amount used each time.

*If you bake infrequently (once a week), stay with the starter recipe above and replace immediately the amount used each time.

*If you bake only now and then (once a month or even less frequently), make a fresh batch one

week before use. If you own a freezer, divide starter into two equal parts; reserve one-half for use within two weeks, and freeze the remainder until a day or two before using.

*Unless frozen, the sourdough should be stored in a cool spot indoors, in a bowl lightly covered with a cloth. It can be kept this way, without any further attention, for ten to fifteen days.

White Bread

10½ cups flour
2½ cups water
3 cups sourdough
6 tablespoons shortening, melted
2½ teaspoons salt
3 cups lukewarm potato water (water used to boil potatoes in)
4½ tablespoons sugar

Day before baking, remove sourdough from cool storage and add 1½ cups each of flour and water. Keep in warm spot overnight, then remove and set aside 3 cups and return balance to cool storage. Combine the 3 cups of sourdough mixture with lukewarm potato water, shortening, and sugar. Sift 4½ cups of flour and stir into batter. Cover bowl tightly and let stand in warm (85°F) place * for 3 hours or until doubled in size.

Sift together remaining flour and the salt, and work into the raised dough. Turn out onto floured board and knead until smooth. If dough is too sticky, add a little more flour. Place dough in oiled bowl, and turn until coated on all sides. Cover bowl with dry towel, place again in warm spot, and let stand (about 3 hours) until doubled in size.

Again, turn out onto lightly floured board, and

* Chimney recess, top of coal or wood stove, radiator, or in very slow oven.

knead lightly. Cut into three equal portions and shape each portion into a loaf. Place on baking sheet, brush tops with melted butter, and let stand (covered with towel) until doubled in size. Bake at 350° for about 1 hour, or until a straw inserted in center of loaf comes out clean. For a particularly crusty loaf of bread, brush the tops with ice water about 15 minutes before removing from oven.

Hotcakes

- 3 eggs, separated
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups sourdough
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 3 teaspoons water
- Oil, lard, or butter

Beat egg yolks with salt until thick. Add sourdough and stir in well. Beat whites until stiff, then beat in sugar. Gently fold into sourdough mixture. Dissolve baking powder in water and add to batter, stirring gently. Cook hotcakes on greased griddle or skillet until browned on both sides.

Storing Foods

Knowledge of the drying, storing and general processing of vegetables and fruits in season, and herbs and meats is invaluable. The blanching and drying of vegetables is relatively simple and requires the application of slow heat. Peas and beans should be allowed to mature on the vine, then spread out to dry on shallow pans in the sun. All types of peppers can be dried by hanging, stem down, where the sun can reach them. Vegetable

tops, celery, parsley, onions, herbs, and such, can be dried on racks in a slow oven or an equivalent. Fruits can be oven- or sun-dried:

Fruit	*Preparation*	*Drying Time (hours)*	*Temperature (°F)*
Apples	Pare, core, slice, dip in salt water	4 to 6	110 to 150
Berries	Wash and drain	6 to 8	110 to 140
Peaches	Cut in half, remove pits	4 to 6	110 to 150
		OR:	spread out on shallow pans in sun until dried

Mushrooms

The ubiquitous mushroom is both delicacy, and has excellent nutritional value. There are over 700 varieties of wild mushrooms and the communitarian is forewarned that it is essential to distinguish the edible ones from the poisonous. One may also grow mushrooms in flat, shallow bins built into tiers, in dark, dry basements or root cellars. Of course, they may be purchased in season and then dried and stored.

Drying Mushrooms: Soon after picking or purchasing, trim off end of stem, but *do not peel* the mushrooms. Spread immediately on paper or board and place in sunny place or in slow oven (140°). To cook: wash well in cold water and cook as you would fresh mushrooms.

Mushroom Sauce Supreme

Sauté 1 large finely minced onion in butter or margarine until limp. Remove from pan and keep warm. Add more butter or margarine to pan; sauté ¼ pound mushrooms, thinly sliced, until lightly browned. Season to taste with salt and pepper and, if you like, a dash of Tabasco. Add a generous pinch of basil, 1 tablespoon minced chives, and some chopped fresh parsley. Return onion to pan. Slowly stir in 1 cup of sour cream. Heat through, but *do not allow the sauce to boil.*

Storing Root Vegetables: Communes in areas where winters are harsh should store their root vegetables—potatoes, onions, turnips, carrots, and such. The first requirement is a dark, dry, cool (32 to 45°) area. In the wilderness and rural regions the storage area would be a root cellar. For communes in the suburbs it might be the basement or a protected corner of the garage. In an apartment, it might be a spare room, with blackout curtains on the windows and the radiator turned off, or a walk-in-closet. In addition to winter vegetables, these same storage areas can be used for dried fruits and vegetables, smoked and preserved meats, fruit preserves, and canned goods.

Pick over vegetables carefully, discarding any with bruised or broken skins. In the case of carrots, trunips and beets, leave a good 2 inches of green tops untrimmed. The vegetables (all those mentioned here *except* potatoes, about which see below) must be stored in bins or boxes of sand or garden soil. Bury vegetables on their sides and surround them with enough sand or soil so they will not touch each other. The soil should be kept slightly moist; too much moisture will cause vege-

tables to rot, too little will dry them out. In the case of onions, leave them in the sun for several days until they dry throughly; if not properly cured, they will sprout new greens and rot. If you grow tomatoes, you may pull those vines which contain large clusters of green fruit before the first frost. Make sure you pull vines up by roots, then hang them, stem down, from ceiling hooks or cross-poles, where the tomatoes will gradually ripen. Ripe tomatoes, of course, must first be dried or canned before storing.

Discard potatoes that are bruised, scabby, or show signs of having been touched by rot or frost. If stored in basement or root cellar, spread out or pile on floooring of wooden planks. No soil or sand is necessary and potatoes may be stored in a pile up to 36 inches deep. Apartment dwellers wishing to store one or two months' supply at a time may do so in 100-pound burlap bags, in wooden barrels with air-holes bored through sides, or in fruit or vegetable crates

Cooking Dried Fruit and Vegetables: All dried fruits (except apples) and vegetables should be thinly sliced and soaked overnight—using three parts water to one part fruit or vegetable. Apples need be soaked for only two hours. After fruits and vegetables regain freshness and moisture, cook as you would fresh produce.

Grape Wine

1 crate Concord grapes or 27 pounds wild grapes	Cold water
15 pounds sugar	Cheese cloth
	3 2-gallon stone or glass jugs

Pick over grapes carefully, discarding unripe, overripe and spoiled fruit. Wash well under cold running water. Place 9 pounds of grapes and 5 pounds of sugar in large crock, pan, or old-fashioned washtub or wash boiler. Crush slightly with heavy crockery plate or some other weighty object. Transfer to jug and fill to brim with cold water. Cover with cheese cloth and let stand in warm place for six weeks, stirring two or three times each week. Strain pulp through large sieve, then through two layers of cheese cloth. Return to jug and let stand for three weeks or longer until sediment settles at bottom. Strain again through several layers of cheese cloth, and bottle in fifths or quarts. The wine will be "green" (new) at this point, but if you can't wait, drink it anyway. Otherwise, lay bottles on side in a cool, dry place, and age for 30 to 90 days or longer.

Blackberry Cordial

12 quarts blackberries
6 pounds sugar
1 cinnamon stick
6 quarts whiskey
1 teaspoon *each* whole allspice and whole cloves

Pick over throughly for stems, greens and spoiled fruit. Wash well under cold running water. Place berries in large kettle, add water to cover, along with the spices tied up in cheesecloth. Boil until very soft. Then strain through cheese cloth bag, squeezing bag between hands until all liquid is out of the pulp. Measure liquid after straining. To each quart of juice, add 3 cups of sugar and return to kettle. Boil for 25 minutes, cool, measure again. To each quart of remaining liquid, add 1 pint of

whiskey. Pour into wooden keg and pound bung in tightly, or bottle and cork tightly. Will keep indefinitely and improve with age.

Apple Cider Vinegar

Choose ripe apples, free from decay or bruises. Remove stems and leaves, and wash well under running water. Crush fruit in cider press and transfer juice to a large, uncovered kettle. Boil it down until juice is reduced by one-half, skimming frequently to remove scum that will rise to the surface. What you have now is sweet apple cider. To make vinegar, pour the cider into an open crock or jug and store in a cool place. It will turn to vinegar within four to eight weeks. Strain through cheesecloth, bottle and seal. It will last indefinitely without further attention.

Brandied Fruit

(1)
2 tablespoons mixed spices *
2 tablespoons grated lemon rind
2 fifth bottles brandy
2 quarts firm, ripe strawberries, washed and hulled
Sugar, equal in weight to strawberries

(2)
2 quarts cherries, stemmed
2 quarts raspberries, washed and hulled

NOTE Production of homemade wines, cordials and liquors up to 200 gallons for home consumption *only* is legal in most states, providing intent is reported to the District Supervisor, Alcohol Tax Unit, Bureau of Internal Revenue, in the district where spirits are made and consumed. Larger quantities are considered illegal unless the manufacturer is licensed to operate a "bonded distillery."

* Mixed spices may include combination of equal parts of whole allspice and cloves, cinnamon stick, thyme and rosemary.

Sugar, equal in weight to the fruit
Brandy

and, as fruit season progresses . . .

(3)
2 quarts grapes, stemmed, halved, seeded
2 quarts blackberries, washed and hulled
2 quarts peaches, pared, halved or quartered, pits discarded
2 quarts plums, whole or halved, pits discarded
Sugar, equal in weight to the fruit
Brandy

(1) Place the first three ingredients into 4- or 5-gallon crock or glass container. Add strawberries and sugar. Cover tightly and let stand in cool place.

(2) After two weeks, add cherries, raspberries, and sugar, and enough brandy to keep fruit mixture submerged under liquid.

(3) Add fruits as they come into season. Add sugar and enough brandy to keep fruit mixture submerged under liquid.

When crock has been filled to within three or four inches of rim, weight it down to keep fruit submerged under liquid and let mixture stand for three months. When it is ready to eat, mixture may be transferred to small glass jars and sealed. Serve as a relish with just about anything.

Country-Cured Ham

8 large, fresh hams, 10 to 16 pounds each *
1½ pounds brown sugar or maple sugar
2 ounces sodium nitrate
4 pints coarse salt
¼ pound black pepper
Cayenne pepper
1 quart honey
Brown wrapping paper
Bolt of white muslin
Clear shellac
Seasoned hardwood sawdust **

Mix together the sugar, sodium nitrate, and 1 pint of the salt. Rub well into hams, making sure to get plenty into the exposed (butt) ends. Let stand 36 hours. Mix 2 pints of the salt with the black pepper and rub thoroughly into hams. Let stand for one week. Rub remaining salt into hams. Set aside in cool, dry, dark place and let stand for thirty days. Hang hams and brush off salt with moderately stiff brush.

Smoking: Hang hams in smokehouse and smoke for ten days to two weeks over fire of sawdust, slightly dampened with water. Rub hams with Cayenne pepper. Warm the honey until it flows freely and brush over hams. Hang for one more week. Then wrap hams in brown paper, and fit snugly into bags made from white muslin. Coat muslin with shellac. Hang hams in smokehouse, butt (thicker) end down. Hams will keep indefinitely and the flavor will improve with age.

* Hams should be from hindquarters of corn-fed hogs

** The best sawdust is from cherry, apple, or hickory wood

Country-Cured Bacon

150 pounds fresh bacon
12 pounds salt
5 pounds brown sugar, or maple sugar
⅛ pound black pepper
5 ounces sodium nitrate
½ gallon honey
6 gallons water
Oak barrel, new or well-scrubbed
Round board
10-pound stone

Place sides of bacon on bare board surface and rub well with salt. Let stand 72 hours. Mix together the sugar, sodium nitrate and pepper; dissolve in water. Add honey. Boil for 15 minutes, skimming off scum that will rise to surface. Allow liquid to cool. Place bacon in bottom of barrel and pour to fit inside dimension of barrel, on top of meat. Weight down with stone, making sure the meat is kept below surface of brine. Will keep for a year or more.

Smoking: May be removed from brine after five weeks. Hang in moderately warm room until thoroughly dry, then follow directions for smoking ham (above).

Country-Smoked Sausage

50 pounds lean pork
20 pounds fat pork
1½ pounds salt
5 tablespoons black pepper
5 cups sage
2 ounces red pepper pods, chopped
4 ounces sodium nitrate
Sausage cutter
Sausage casings

Cut meat into very small pieces. Blend all seasonings and mix thoroughly with meat. Feed

through sausage cutter into large pan or other container. Attach sausage stuffer to cutter. Put sausage through cutter again, feeding it into casings and tying securely with cord according to the size of sausage wanted. Hang (in loops) in smokehouse. Smoke with equal amounts of green hickory and apple wood for 4 to 6 days. Hang in smokehouse or some other cool, dry place. Will keep indefinitely.

Preserved Fresh Eggs

Only very fresh eggs with perfect shells should be preserved.

Select 15 dozen fresh eggs.

To 9 parts of tap water use 1 part of *water glass* (may be purchased from a druggist). Boil tap water. When cool, add water glass and beat well. Pack eggs in rows in an 8-gallon stone crock, being careful not to crack shells. Add liquid to cover well. Place heavy plate over eggs in crock to keep them submerged three or four inches under liquid. Cover crock and keep in cool, dark place. More eggs can be added at any time, so long as you make sure to keep them well covered with liquid. Eggs stored in this manner will keep indefinitely.

Tomato Catsup

- 46 large, firm, ripe tomatoes
- 18 tart apples, pared and cored
- 15 medium onions
- 8 green peppers
- 4½ cups sugar
- 8 tablespoons salt
- 1½ teaspoons cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1½ quarts cider vinegar
- 10 ½-pint Mason jars

Cook tomatoes, apples, peppers and onions until soft. Strain through colander, then through medium-fine sieve. Add remaining ingredients and simmer slowly over low flame until thick, stirring fairly often. Bottle, while still hot, in sterilized jars and seal at once.

COOKBOOKS

Quantity Recipes, Marion A. Wood and Katherine W. Harris. 1945, 1966; 233 pp. Available from Cornell Home Economics Extension, New York State College of Human Ecology, Mailing Room, Building 7, Research Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850. $1.

The Impoverished Student's Book of Cookery, Drinkery, and Housekeepery, J. F. Rosenberg. 1965; 48 pp. Available from Doubleday & Co., 501 Franklin Avenue, Garden City, Long Island, New York 11531. $1.25.

A Cookbook for Poor Poets and Others, Ann Rogers. 1968; 179 pp. Available from Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York. $4.50.

Smoke Cooking, Matt Kramer and Roger Sheppard. 1969; 256 pp. Available from Hawthorne Books, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York. $5.95.

Zen Macrobiotic Cooking Book of Oriental and Traditional Recipes, Michael Abehsera. 1968; 205 pp. Available from The Order of the Universe Publications, Box 203, Prudential Center Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02199. $6.25.

COMMUNES IN THE U.S. & CANADA

The commune movement is a rapidly growing phenomenon. However, as indicated by the preceding text, the dynamics of which are compounded by many pressures, internal and external, with the result that many groups quickly disappear from the scene and other remain unreported. An excellent contact and informational source, mentioned by many communitarians with whom I have come in contact, is *The Modern Utopian*, published quarterly by Alternatives! Foundation at 2441 Le Conte Avenue, Berkeley, California. A one-year subscription is $4.00; outside the U.S., add $1 postage. The editor/publisher is Dick Fairfield.

The following is a list of communes currently in existence. I would suggest that any visits to these groups be preceded by some form of advance notice and confirmation of their availability.

Arizona
SOLERI, 6433 Doubletree Ranch Road, Phoenix

California
ALTERNATIVES FOUNDATION, P.O. BOX 1264, Berkeley
AMERICAN LANDUIST SOCIETY, Southern California
BEAUMONT FOUNDATION, 640 Sandra Avenue, La Puente
BHODAN CENTER OF INQUIRY, Sierra Route, Oakhurst
BLACK BEAR RANCH, Sawyer's Bar
BRIDGE MOUNTAIN, Ben Lomond
CHURCH OF THE GOLDEN RULE, Northern California
EXCHANGE, 715 Ashbury, San Francisco
GATE 5, Box 854, Sausalito (c/o Piro Caro)
GORDA MOUNTAIN, Big Sur
HARRAD L.A., 721 La Brea, Room 205, Los Angeles
HARRAD WEST, 2928 Derby Street, Berkeley
HERE AND NOW, 1387 Haight Street, San Francisco
HOUSE OF THE 7TH ANGEL, Box 40, Route 1, Red Dog Road, Nevada City
KERISTA/MONTEREY, 251 Littleness, Monterey
KERISTA/S.F., 128 Coleridge Street, San Francisco
MEADOWLARK FARM, 26126 Fairview Avenue, Hemet
MESSIAH'S WORLD, 1387 Oak Street, San Francisco
MORNINGSTAR RANCH, 12542 Graton Road, Sebastopol

NOMADS, Box 5116, Santa Monica
OLYMPALI RANCH, Route 101, Novato
PEACH HOUSE, 724 North Marengo, Pasadena
PORT CHICAGO VIGIL, P.O. Box 31055, San Francisco
RESISTANCE, 1514 Grant Street/2611 McGee Street, Berkeley
SUTTER STREET COMMUNE, 1869 Sutter Street, San Francisco
SYNANON FOUNDATION, 1351 Ocean Front, Santa Monica
WELLER RANCH, Occidental

Colorado
DROP CITY, Box 125, Route 1, Trinidad
LAUGHING COYOTE MOUNTAIN, Black Hawk (c/o T. D. Linge)
LIBRE, Gardner

Connecticut
NARROW RIDGE AND THE COMMUNITY MARKET, Voluntown (c/o Charles McLanahan)
NEW ENGLAND CNVA FARM, Box 1978, RFD 1, Voluntown

Florida
GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL, Orange City
MELBOURNE, 530 Hammock Road, Melbourne

Illinois
CLAN PAX (Peace Tribe), 3611 West Iowa Street, Chicago
NATURALISM, P.O. Box 8183, Chicago
VILLAGE OF FREE SOULS, 3042 West Wilson, Chicago

Iowa
GARDINER, TIM, 1310 Seventh Street, Des Moines

Kansas
HURRLE, 1505 Fairchild, Manhattan
ROSALEE—S, Harper

Kentucky
HOSKINS, RR 2, Kiddville Road, Mt. Sterling

Maine
NOAH'S ARK, Star Route, Monk Road, Harrison

Maryland
HEATHCOTE COMMUNITY (School of Living), Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland
KERGUELEN ISLES, c/o Backus, 7400 R.I. Avenue, #3, College Park.

Massachusetts
ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL DESIGN, 45 Rutland Square, Boston
FORT HILL COMMUNITY, c/o American Avatar, 5 Fort Avenue Terrace, Roxbury
GOULD FARM, Great Barrington
HARRAD, 145 Walden Street, Cambridge
LEYDEN COMMUNITY, Leyden Road, Leyden
NORDECA, Bellingham

Michigan
EC2, 922 West Kalamazoo Avenue, Kalamazoo
TRANS-LOVE ENERGIES, 1520 Hill Street, Ann Arbor
USA, Box 155, Clawson

Minnesota
CARLETON COLLECTIVE COMMUNITIES CLEARING HOUSE, Carleton College, Northfield
FIREHOUSE THEATRE PEOPLE AND FRIENDS HOME, St. Paul
FREE FOLK, Pennington

Mississippi
EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR COOPERATIVES, P. O. Box 3345, Jackson
LIBERTY HOUSE, Box 3193

Missouri
UNITY VILLAGE, Lees Summit

New Hampshire
SHILOH COMMUNITY, Sherman

New Mexico
CITY OF LIGHT, Box 1804, Santa Fe
LAMA FOUNDATION, Box 444, San Cristóbal
NEW BUFFALO, Box 778, Arroyo Hondo
PLACENTAS Area
TAOS Area

New York
ATLANTIS I, RFD 5, Box 22A, Saugerties
CENTERS FOR CHANGE, 264 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn
CLINTON STREET COMMUNE, 548 Clinton Street, Brooklyn
EMMAUS HOUSE, 241 East 116th Street, New York City
EXPANDED FAMILY, P.O. Box 415, New York City

HICKORY HILL, Tappan
HIGHLANDER COMMUNITY, Paradox
HOGG FARM COMMUNITY, 16 Minetta Lane, New York City
IAMU COMMUNITY FARM, West Lewis Road, Elizabethtown
PEACE ACTION FARM, Hicks Hill Road, Stanfordville
SKY VIEW ACRES, Pomona
SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF EARLY AMERICAN STANDARDS, Route 2, Oxford
SOCIETY OF FAMILIES, Frewsburg
WOODSTOCK COMMUNE, Box 108, RFD 2, Saugerties

North Carolina
CELO COMMUNITY, Route 5, Burnsville

Ohio
LANES END, Brookville
RISING SUN TRIBE, Miamisville
THE VALE, Box 275, Route 1, Yellow Springs

Oregon
ALTA, Northern Oregon
CAVE JUNCTION Area
CROW RESEARCH FOUNDATION, RR 1, Box 706, Veneta
FAMILY OF MYSTIC ARTS, Box 546, Sunny Valley
GRANT'S PASS Area
KEN KESEY, Pleasant Hill
MAGIC MOUNTAIN FARM, Cave Junction
YELLOW SUBMARINE COMMUNE, 2449 Flora Hill Drive, Eugene

Pennsylvania
CLOSE FARM, Meadville
HIGH HOUSE, High Avenue, Germantown
NEW MEADOW RUN COMMUNITY, Farmington
POWELTON NEIGHBORS, 3508 Hamilton, Philadelphia
TANGUY HOMESTEADS, West Chester

Rhode Island
EARTH HOUSE, 129 Benefit Street, Providence

Tennessee
FEDERATION OF COMMUNITIES IN SERVICE, 4401 Sullivan Road, Knoxville

Vermont
GREENFEEL, Box 347, Barre

Virginia
TWIN OAKS, Box 169, Route 4, Louisa

Washington
IC., Box 5166, Seattle
MAGIC MOUNTAIN, 52nd and 19th Streets, Seattle
MAY VALLEY COOP, 10218 147th S.E., Renton
TOLSTOY FARM, RFD., Davenport

Wisconsin
COOPERATIVE HUMANIST SOCIETY, 514 North Johnson, Madison
MAKEPEACE COLONY, Stephens Point

Canada

B'NAI OR, 47A Inkster Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba

EVERDALE PLACE, RR 1, Hillsbury, Ontario

LANARK HILLS COMMUNITY, RR 1, Hillsburgh, Ontario

LAND FELLOWSHIP, Smithville, Ontaric

NEW FAMILY, Slocan Park, B.C.

SATURNA FREE SCHOOL, Saturna Island, B.C.

YASODHARA ASHRAM, Kootenay Bay, B.C.

UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPERS

ANN ARBOR ARGUS, 725 North University, #7, Ann Arbor, Michigan. $3 per year.

ASTRAL PROJECTION, Box 4383, Albuquerque, New Mexico. 5¢ per issue.

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BERKELEY TRIBE, P.O. Box 9043, Berkeley, California. $6 per year.

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RAT, 241 East Fourteenth Street, New York City. $5 per year.
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